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... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XLIII

JULY 1956

No 3

WORDS OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

(The Blessed One said :)

‘A just life, a religious life, this they call the best gem, if any one has gone forth from house-life to a houseless life.

‘But if he be harsh-spoken, and like a beast delighting in injuring (others), then the life of such a one is very wicked, and he increases his own pollution.

‘A Bhikkhu who delights in quarrelling and is shrouded in folly, does not understand the Dhamma that is preached and taught by Buddha.

‘Injuring his own cultivated mind, and led by ignorance, he does not understand that sin is the way leading to hell.

‘Having gone to calamity, from womb to womb, from darkness to darkness, such a Bhikkhu verily, after passing away, goes to pain.

‘As when there is a pit of excrement (that has become) full during a number of years,—he who should be such a one full of sin is difficult to purify.

‘Whom you know to be such a one, O Bhikkhus, (a man) dependent on a house, having sinful desires, sinful thoughts, and being with sinful deeds and objects,

‘Him do avoid, being all in concord : blow him away as sweepings, put him away as rubbish.

‘Then remove as chaff those that are no Samanas, (but only) think themselves, blowing away those that have sinful desires and those with sinful deeds and objects.

‘Be pure and live together with the pure, being thoughtful : then agreeing (and) wise you will put an end to pain.’

Dhammachariyasutta : *Sutta-Nipata*
(V. Fausboll's translation)

REHABILITATION OF HINDU SOCIETY

THE PROBLEM OF OUR SUBMERGED MILLIONS

(continued from the previous issue)

Though all these people—Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes—are called 'submerged', the Government of India have fully recognized that their problems are not the same everywhere and hence approaches to those problems have also to be different.

(1) The Scheduled Tribes of India are the earliest inhabitants (Adivasis) of the country who in the face of invading hordes took shelter in the mountain fastness and thick forests and lived there down the centuries in isolated groups totally unconnected with the main current of life in the country. According to 1951 census there are about 245 Scheduled Tribes with a total population of 19·1 millions who live in different levels of primitive existence, speaking different languages of their own and observing varying social and religious customs.

These sturdy people who live nearest to Nature lack almost everything which our 'modern civilization' promises. But it does not appear that they are unhappy for that lacking. One does not always know whether or not some of their primitive practices are not of nobler content than the sophisticated practices of civilized societies. We have, however, made it our article of faith that they require to be integrated in the general life of the nation. Now this process of integration is obstructed by some extraneous influences, absence of one common language understandable to the tribes and inaccessibility of their habitations.

The Government of India's policy in this regard has been a cautious and wise one of non-interference* in their way of life but yet coming close to them in various persuasive and purposive ways. The idea is to avoid thrusting the so-called civilization on them but bringing civilization at their doors for selective and free will absorption. Naturally, this process has to be slow. But there should be no flurried attempts to avoid this slowness.

These people who live the most natural and unsophisticated lives have to be integrated into the national life in *their* natural way. There should be no fixed time-table for making them perfectly civilized. And all approaches to their betterment should be devoid of the slightest tinge of superciliousness. In fact, there should be no conscious attempt at civilizing them, but only attempts to serve them in order to provide them better living, thinking and being conditions. If civilization has a superior light acceptable to them they will accept it. One has only to serve and wait as long as they require one to wait and serve.

(2) The largest number of submerged people—above 55 millions—come from the Scheduled Castes who are variously called as *panchamas*, exterior castes, depressed castes, untouchables or Harijans. The Scheduled Castes comprise of vast mass of humanity who unlike the Scheduled Tribes have remained very near the so-called forward society—lived with and served them but suffered from all sorts of privations, disabilities and difficulties. The treatment Hindus have generally meted out to this section of their very own people—who form the flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone—does little credit to Hindu religion, philosophy or history. These hewers of wood, carriers of water and toilers of the soil and doers of all kinds of arduous and unclean jobs, while doing very important works, form the lowest stratum of Indian national life and are the most vulnerable to calamities, natural or otherwise. With all their philosophy in their heads, Hindus practised untouchability, which has been declared by a great saint as nothing but social lunacy. Side by side the practice of untouchability, higher intelligence and inner conscience of society very often revolted not always with success in the past. But it can be claimed today that the battle against untouchability

is more than half won. The declaration in the Constitution that practice of untouchability in any form will be considered a cognizable offence is a hall-mark of actualized Indian social revolution. And it is good to remember that the battle for socially downtrodden has been mostly fought by the caste Hindus themselves. Many a good soul are devoted to this cause with a spiritual fervour. Hindus are determined to wipe out this curse root and branch and go all out to improve the lot of the Scheduled Castes in all conceivable ways. In this determination of this nation there is no half-heartedness. That is not to say that there is not a section of orthodoxy still bent upon imagining that if untouchability were wiped out, Hinduism would suffer profanation and gradual dwindling. But time-spirit will not surely leave them uninstructed.

Apart from constitutional safeguards, Scheduled Castes are offered special representation in legislatures, reservation in services and special privileges for education. In other words, all the avenues of prosperity have been opened to them almost in a vicarious way, in a sense of contrition. Nowhere in the world any section of people is offered so many privileges as are done the Scheduled Castes of India. This, however, does not mean that their problems are well-nigh solved. A problem of centuries cannot be solved by mere legislation or Government ukase. It tends to take irritating time. Various natural difficulties also arise. One cannot hasten the progress by just not recognizing these difficulties.

(3) 'Backward Classes'—a term which remains yet undefined in the Constitution of India—indicates such people as are educationally, socially and economically backward. In some States no difference is made between Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes. The Government of India appointed a Commission to go into the affairs of the Backward Classes with Sri Kaka Sahib Kalelkar as the Chairman. The report of the Commission is now being examined by the Central and State Governments.

In addition to this, some 198 nomadic tribes whose exact population number does

not seem to be known are also counted in the group of submerged people. According to an Act passed in 1924, they used to be considered criminal tribes because of their habit of banditry. But this Act has been repealed from August 20, 1952, and the so-called ex-criminal tribes are thenceforth considered as backward people and they are granted all facilities and privileges for social, educational and economic betterment.

(4) While considering the question of rehabilitation of Hindu society, we have also to keep in view the problem of the uprooted humanity, popularly known as refugees. Though all refugees do not technically belong to Backward Classes, they are in a real sense heterogenous mass of unfortunate people requiring fresh start in life. No social scheme can be complete without their proper rehabilitation.

Though by any standard the official and non-official machinery for rehabilitation of Hindu society may not be called a bad one, it is good to stay awakened and aware of the fact that we have but begun the work and much yet remains to be done. It will also be helpful to subject all national activities in this regard to critical scrutiny in order to ascertain whether or not we are going in the right direction.

Broadly speaking (as we have seen in the Editorial of June '56), the States' work for the upliftment of the Backward Classes falls under the following headings: special privileges for education, special representation in legislature and special reservation of Government jobs. While all these steps are necessary, from the perspective of the national destiny in the future of mankind, if over-emphasis on special privileges is extended beyond a particular limit, it will not be found impossible that greatest harm was being done to the cause of backward people with all good intentions. The problem associated with a humanity on march requires dynamic thinking and adjustment. It must be remembered that this one-third of the population of India which the Backward Classes form is not a separate humanity

but a part and parcel of the entire body of Indian humanity.

The levelling up of the Backward Classes should not mean levelling down in any way of the so-called forward classes, for that will mean a national suicide, which will menacingly affect Backward Classes also in course of time. We just cannot afford to do that.

It appears that in India we are not today sufficiently aware that good human material in any place of society requires recognition for the good of the nation.

The reservation of opportunities of the Backward Classes which confer their boon of protected lives, if not utilized with sagacity could smother the promise of these classes of people. Cases have been noticed that privilege-aware Harijan students who are sure of their future do not exert themselves as diligently as they should. Now, we must see that such cases do not turn out to be the general characteristic of the Backward Classes.

You cannot sharpen a sword against mud. It requires some stiff resistance. The resistance that a stone offers to a sword which is to be sharpened is an act of friendship.

Those who think that Backward Classes can be brought up to the level of the

so-called higher castes by removing through legislation or special provisions all competition are poor students of human psychology. The tariff policy of inter-caste permutation when over-emphasized may have far-reaching disastrous effect. We can clearly see that. Frustrated talents will sap so much national energy without our knowing it that we will develop only a race of mediocres. But this competitive world calls for growth of heroes of head and heart. Look at America. Look at Russia. In the recent Atom for Peace Conference at Geneva, America presented more than 100 papers whereas India only a dozen or so, though they were undoubtedly papers of high quality. Now the necessity of producing talents by numbers can be ignored by India only at the risk of being left behind in this racing world. India has that potentiality provided it is cultivated with sagacity. A talent need not be a sacrifice on the cross of our sociological problems. Every department of life is growing ever so much complicated. Science is getting so highly specialized. Keeping spiritual poise in this noisy world is becoming a problem. Under these circumstances, everywhere we require full-grown brains, hearts and minds.¹

1. In an interesting 'American Letter' published in the *Swatantra* (Madras, dated June 9, '56, we are given the 'Scientists Vision of New Civilization for 21st Century':

'These conclusions are part of a "speculative projection" on the world that has been drafted by faculty members of the California Institute of Technology. The projection, a glimpse into the twenty-first Century, has been presented at private conferences.

'The California report on world resources is designed to complement regular studies made by individual industries. Long-term trends and prospects beyond the conventional business purview, are the substance of the study. Thus oil companies heard reports on the exhaustion of the world's oil and gas pools; steel companies heard about the time when nuclear fuels will be about the only sources of electricity.

'The predictions apply only if world catastrophe is avoided. Technology can ease but it cannot solve political and economic problems, the scientists reported.'

'Man is standing at the gateway to a new era of civilization. In the next hundred years the earth's population will multiply at least two to four times. Technology can feed, clothe and shelter these people adequately, and in some cases well. There will be no shortage of minerals, oil or metals. Machine civilization will spread over the earth and it can provide all from the most common substance: air, sea-water, ordinary rock and sunlight.

'Only one possible raw material shortage is foreseen—brain power. Educated men and women are needed to plan and design to construct and operate the machine civilization that will care for the startling increase in the world population expected by year 2050.

'Brain power is the key. Education, Government and industry must meet in a deliberate and sustained effort to sense the future and to plan for it. There is a chasm that technology must hurdle:

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To stultify the natural process of this development will be a terrific subversion to long-term national interest of India. The caste-problem has therefore to be viewed from a very broad angle from the standpoint of comprehensive human welfare. Every single talent has to be nursed up.

It is only in this atmosphere of free growth that so-called backward people will have genuine inspiration for self-development. You cannot hospitalize a man to prosperity as a normal affair. In America, where there is a similar problem of higher and lower classes, the Negroes resent any special pri-

vilage. They consider it as an affront to their potentiality. What they want is equal rights and equal opportunities and no discrimination at all favourable or unfavourable.

It appears to be our national policy to absorb in high Government jobs as many mediocre persons from Backward Classes as possible. Can this policy do good to the backward people and to the nation as a whole? In this India of ours where we are going inevitably socialist, where, as days pass on, the State is becoming all-important in our lives, we require our best men to run the affairs of our State.² Otherwise our lives

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raw materials and food already are running short just as the earth's population starts its greatest increase: from 2,600,000,000 persons today to some 6,700,000,000 persons in hundred years. Possibly more.'

'Dr Weir emphasized that brain power was the key. "As we expend more and more money in the extraction of materials from lower and lower grade of ores, we meet an ever increasing need for more skilled man-power, for more trained scientists and engineers," Dr. Weir said.

"So in a very real sense the critical limiting factor on the world's resources is not materials, energy or food, but brain power," he asserted.

'Already we have shortage of engineers and scientists; this will certainly get worse in future, he said. The big problem is the waste in the development of intellectual talent. Half the capable young men and women are not educated, one-third of the exceptionally talented are not educated, he said.

'Fortunately, Dr Weir emphasized, man-power is the only one of the resources of the earth today that is replenishable. If the population is to increase, then the number of young men and women to be educated must increase.

'To reduce the waste of talent, Dr Weir recommended that society make conscious effort to identify talented young scientists and engineers early and to encourage them to get an education. Also he suggested that we improve methods of teaching so that creative thinking can be stimulated in the talented. He urged, too, that ways be found to teach "difficult" subjects to persons who do not possess ability to learn them with present teaching methods.

'The brain power to meet the demands of machine civilization where increasing population is multiplied by increasing demands (under conditions where raw materials become scarcer) can be trained only if his education, government and industry—rise to the challenge, Dr Weir emphasized.'

This study has a relevancy of far wider scope than is obvious here. The real challenge of the age is not only to the brain of man—man cannot live by brain alone even as he cannot live by bread alone—but to the entire potential of man, his heart, mind, soul, brain, his divinity. Man is called to manifest all his powers of brain, heart and soul to the maximum extent in order to make a great human age of history. While specialized and cultured humanity is like processed human material, backward humanity is like virgin soil and raw minerals. We cannot afford to ignore any section of humanity because the challenge of the age is to the entire human material. Rehabilitation of Hindu society today is to be conceived in this perspective.—*Ed.*

2. With an experience that is his, Sri C. Rajagopalachari warned in his very thoughtful radio talk (broadcast from Bombay on August 15, '55)—'The Good Administrator':

'...No people can be happy with an inefficient Government, or with a Government that is not firm and impartial. The psychology of the caste nexus and of class differences is strong in India. All the greater is the need for firm and impartial officials, and the common people know this.

'For any administration to be good and efficient as a whole, we want the right type of men. The quality of men placed in position is more important than the laying down of rules and methods of operation. The caste-consciousness is a hard reality. It unites and divides in a very real manner today whatever be our achievements later. And today is the most important in matters of administration. Short-sighted favouritism and concessions to produce contentment among classes and castes will deteriorate into a constant pandering to intrigues and factions if we do not look to the real efficiency of the administration.'

This warning by the elderly statesman of India who has himself worked hard for the upliftment of the Backward Classes deserves to be taken seriously.—*Ed.*

are bound to be conditioned by those diminutions which require to be healed with all sorts of medications. And that is not a good prospect for the nation. We for one have no doubt that given the opportunities the backward people will in course of time throw up first-rate men. But that is not to say that the work which today requires to be done by first-rate men should be given to others just because they have the qualification of backwardness appended against their names. This situation is not likely to make for drawing out the best from the Backward Classes.

Apart from that, to feed the people of the Backward Classes on the illusion that if they are seated in chairs in Government offices they were on the highway to prosperity all

round is also not a very commendable service to them.

The illusion that great prestige attaches to Government jobs is a heritage of our erstwhile national servitude to an imperial Government. Today the Government officers are not the masters of the people but their servants. In the socialistic pattern of society the Government officers cannot claim any higher prestige than those whose servants they are.

One cannot also make the Government job productive of enormous wealth without being answerable to law! Neither can one lift one's community economically or socially through the instrumentality of Government jobs which are bound to be few in comparison to the number of backward people. So the whole situation requires some urgent rethinking.³

3. We were agreeably impressed by a forthright and thoughtful speech which Sri C. Subramaniam, Minister for Finance and Education, Madras, claiming himself as belonging to the Backward Class, made in the Legislative Council on March 24, '56 :

' Referring to complaints about inadequate help to the Backward Classes, the Minister said Government were anxious to do all they could for amelioration of their conditions. The report of the Backward Classes Commission was under examination. When the recommendations were implemented, the Backward Classes would make rapid progress.

' The Minister said members should remember that there were some "forward" families even among the Backward Classes just as there were some backward people among the "forward" communities. The objective of the Government was to uplift all the backward and raise their standards. Therefore, it was not necessary to make a distinction on the basis of caste.

' Deprecating the tendency to seek only Government jobs, the Minister told leaders of the Backward Classes that Government service was not the only thing that mattered. The job of a Deputy Collector or some other high post secured by a Backward Class person might benefit him and his family, but what concerned the community was that it should progress as a whole. Even if Government doubled the number of jobs and gave them all to the Backward Classes, the problem of their general backwardness would not be solved. There should be equality of opportunity and social justice, but that was different from the problem of raising the general standard of the community as a whole.

' Therefore, the Minister said, leaders of the Backward Classes should "re-think" and realize that the problem before them was not to get a few jobs for the few members of one community or other but to uplift the mass of people from the "sub-human" conditions in which they lived. The real solution was to establish more industries, to improve agricultural methods and to increase productivity in all ways. It was an illusion to suppose that a few more Government jobs would improve the condition of the Backward Classes.

' Mr Alla Pitchai: Demand for more jobs for the Backward Classes is a psychological factor.

' Minister: It is a wrong psychological approach. By concentrating on Government jobs, you are instilling a psychology in which every member of the Backward Classes thinks that he should go in only for Government jobs and if he does not get it, he is finished. By creating that psychological atmosphere, we are blocking all progress. Greater emphasis should be laid on productive effort. That alone will save the community. Government jobs had their own significance in the past but now when we are embarking on industrialization and other productive economic activities, Government service is losing its significance. Let us, therefore, divert our attention more and more towards these. Now the forward communities who are more intelligent do not care for jobs. They are now occupying powerful positions in the industrial and other fields of economic activity. We are still clinging to old ideas and we are always behind times. We should not neglect business and other economic activities.

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The prosperity which one from Backward Classes attains through the privileges conferred on him does not often benefit the community to the expected extent. Very often a high placed man walks away with his prosperity. He is lost to his community except perhaps for political purposes. The high-up one leaves his pristine associations of life and cultivates what is called 'higher circle', while his people remain in stagnation. This is but a natural out-turn of things and human vanity is so powerful. Cases where men from backward communities have made the fruits of their prosperity available for their community in general may not be many. One, however, hears so many slogans. But on scrutiny it will be found that a lot of politics has come to be associated with the social welfare needs of the country. This is an unfortunate development. But we need not despair. Unostentatious, humble, sincere workers for the good of the people, there would be always a few. And we have such people among us. It is they who do the real work though their names and work may not gain any publicity anywhere.

One of their urgent tasks is to see that the upliftment the Backward Classes are brought to attain, does not turn out to be an upliftment of shams, illusions and delusions. Ever so many vagaries, oddities, crudities and futilities are associated with the lives of

the so-called forward people everywhere in the world. It will be a great service to the backward people if they can be saved from rushing in for the vices of forward people and can be guided to always keep in mind a sober view of life. In a way this sober view of life is almost a natural endowment with our so-called backward people. This endowment is the gift of the perennial culture of the nation. Cultureless prosperity can be dangerous beyond all calculations. In order to uplift the Backward Classes in general on proper lines we require to reinvigorate the perennial culture of this nation. No stable general levelling up of the backward people is possible without making the perennial culture of the nation more powerful, dynamic and effective. Those who plan the prosperity of the Backward Classes do not seem to have given sufficient attention to this fact.

While better standard of life is the *sine qua non* of upliftment, mental prosperity is also equally so. To give more food to hungry people is an urgent service; but it is only the beginning of service. One who has good food to eat, good things to enjoy but has no good thought to engage his mind in is a backward man. In other words, the upliftment of our backward people should be simultaneously effected on physical, mental and spiritual levels.

CONCLUSIONS

After having somewhat elaborately—yet not adequately, because there are so many other side-issues to be considered in the context—discussed the problem from various angles, it behoves us now to conclude these deliberations clenching our conclusions in a tabulated manner:

- (1) Rehabilitation of Hindu society requires psychological reconditioning of the entire Hindu humanity and not merely lifting men of some stratum from somewhere to elsewhere.
- (2) This psychological reconditioning is impossible of achievement without the aid

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'When there was an interruption, the Minister said: I shall be more specific. Take the progressive Brahmin community. You find out how many of them are in (Government) jobs and how many are taking to industrial activity. You will find that they are occupying almost the entire industrial field. What is it due to? We are always behind times and we are attaching more importance to Government jobs and neglect the economic field. Therefore, I appeal to those representing the Backward Classes to have a proper perspective. In a way I can claim to belong to a backward community and, fully realizing my responsibilities, I am making this statement. There are still many leaders who think in a backward way and mislead the people.'

of essentials of Hindu religion. Instead of talking about secularity leaders should speak of Vedanta and demonstrate it by living. In this regard Acharya Vinoba Bhave has been rendering that invaluable service to the nation, which we at this point most urgently require for saving the very character of this civilization. His interpretation of Sarvodaya as based on the truths of Advaita requires to be understood and digested by top leaders of this country. Then we will be saved from many calamities that will otherwise befall us. Acharya Vinoba's cultural leadership should be followed by such Government enterprises as Community Projects, National Extension Services, etc. Instead of incessantly speaking of 'socialistic pattern' they should speak to people of Samanya Dharma.

- (3) 'Lifting the masses without disturbing their religion' is the imperative of Swami Vivekananda. 'Their religion' are the words, not your or my opinion about what should be their religion.
- (4) In working for the rehabilitation of the refugees it must be clearly borne in mind that it is for the sake of their faith they are refugees.
- (5) Let there be no more agitational shouting about 'casteism' from political platforms. Enough mischief has already been done. In a seminar on casteism recently held in Poona on May 5 and 6, the Poona branch of Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom took note that 'Casteism had assumed a more acute form since Independence'.⁴ This is the inevitable result of agitational approach to the problem. Direct attack on caste should stop once for all. Only silent indirect work should go on.
- (6) Instead of trying to catch the intangible caste this way or that way to pull it down, let us uphold every man everywhere and make him the whole man. This is the basic problem. Let every man and woman be given the required

physical, mental and spiritual lift. And let us take whatever consequences follow from that instead of theorizing about pattern of society. Nourishing life-conditions should be simultaneously provided for body, mind and soul.

- (7) To give this triple lift we require absolutely correct, impartial and sagacious Government in States and at the Centre. Let us find our way to see that right type of men govern our affairs. Government cannot possibly officially and departmentally work for giving the people spiritual lift. For this we require the dynamic services of the Order of monks in this country. Monks should of themselves realize their abiding duty to the nation and humanity and *independently* (of the Government) but co-operatively work to this end. The idea is to balance the inner richness with the outer affluence.
- (8) Higher standard of living must really mean nobler standard of being for every individual. Prosperity to be meaningful must be squarely based on cultural foundations.
- (9) Anger is temporary suspension of reason and sanity. No glorious future can be built on the basis of permanent anger which will mean a permanent suspension of reason and sanity. Hatred is crystallized anger. So any communal and racial action based on hatred is ruinous. Any injustice flowing out of such hatred is bound to prove a boomerang.
- (10) Both social and economic backwardness should receive just, cautious, and vigilant attention as a *temporary* measure. But 'backwardness' must not be allowed to turn a vested interest—that will harm the Backward Classes beyond measure.
- (11) We cannot lift a man by tearing him from his natural moorings. What we should do is to transform his moorings. A cobbler need not become a blacksmith. We can bring the knowledge of science to the cobbler and make him a better cobbler. This principle can be applied everywhere. This is, however, not to say

4. Vide: *Thought*, Delhi, June '56

that there should be no free movement on the ladder of *svadharmā*.

- (12) In rehabilitation of Hindu society the word 'Hindu' should have its proper significance. That is to say, cultural roots of the people should be taken proper care of. For this we require re-appraisal of the common bases of Hinduism. It is to the transformation of everyone's *guna* and *karma* that we should address ourselves to in our efforts at rehabilitation of Hindu society.
- (13) Common bases of Hinduism are in Vedānta. It is to Vedānta that Hindus

should turn more and more to find solutions of their sociological and other problems.

- (14) A study as to how the Ramakrishna Mission has been silently functioning in relation to this problem for the last half a century, will probably be remunerative to any earnest servant of society.
- (15) It must be remembered that socialism of India has to fit in with the transcendental achievements of the pioneers of this civilization. Our urge for temporal prosperity should be obedient to our conception of the Ultimate Reality.

(concluded)

MAHĀNĀRĀYANOPANISAD

SWĀMĪ VIMALĀNANDA

(continued from the previous issue)

पुरुषस्य विद्म सहस्राक्षस्य महादेवस्य धीमहि । तन्नो रुद्रः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २२ ॥

विश्वस्य पूरयितुः विश्वातीतस्य परमात्मनः स्वरूपं जानीम । तदर्थं अनन्तज्ञानशक्तिमन्तं सहस्राक्षं जगदनुग्राहकं परमेश्वरं ध्यायेम । तत्र ध्यानविषये अस्मान् ज्ञानशक्त्यधिष्ठाता विश्वप्रेरकः रुद्रः प्रचोदयतु प्रेरयतु वर्तयतु च ॥

पुरुषस्य (for पुरुषम्) the Supreme Person विद्म may we know. (तदर्थम् for that Knowledge) सहस्राक्षस्य (for सहस्राक्षम्) thousand-eyed महादेवस्य (for महादेवम्) the Great God धीमहि may we meditate. रुद्रः Rudra, the giver of Knowledge तत् (for तन्न) in that meditation नः us प्रचोदयात् may impel or keep.

22. May we know the Supreme Person and for the attainment of His Knowledge may we meditate upon Him, the thousand-eyed Great God. May Rudra, the giver of Knowledge, impel us towards such meditation and keep us in it.

[NOTES—This and the following 12 passages are called Gāyatrīs addressed to different deities. These are employed by a spiritual aspirant for worship and meditation as also for mental and oral repetition (japa). The term Gāyatrī denotes a particular metre in which a very large number of Vedic stanzas are composed. Of all these stanzas the most outstanding one is the stanza at *R̥gveda* 3. 62. 10 of which the seer is Viśvāmitra and the Deity is Savitr̥. For one of the earliest commendations of Gāyatrī see *Chāndogya Up.* 3. 12. 1. and Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on it. This mantra is used by a twice-born Hindu in his daily devotions and during special acts of worship. The Gāyatrī mantra is also called Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī in view of the fact that it is addressed to Savitr̥ and worshipped also as Sarasvatī. Gāyatrī itself is considered as a feminine Deity. In common usage, however, the word Gāyatrī implies the mantra in 24 letters occurring in a particular pattern. The Supreme Reality, Paramātmā or Parabrahman,

is invoked through this stanza. Exactly on the same ideal and verbal pattern several other Gāyatrīs have come into vogue although none of them has attained the same universality, sanctity and significance which the original Gāyatrī possesses. Nevertheless every holy formula cast in the mould of the first and foremost Gāyatrī has an outstanding part to play in the worship of that particular deity with whom it is connected. A name and characteristic description of the object of worship, a longing on the part of the worshipper to comprehend that object of worship in contemplation and a prayer to the deity worshipped for goading, guiding and holding one's instrument of understanding so that one might attain the highest and best fruit of life—these comprise the essence of all worship and the Gāyatrī formula presents them in the most luminous and concise manner. The greatest help which man should expect of God is not personal services rendered for the satisfaction of his desires and needs like a good neighbour reciprocating previous favours, but the guidance of his thoughts in the right direction. In all the Gāyatrīs, therefore, the central thought consists in a petition to the Most High for initiating, controlling and developing thoughts, desires and feelings of the worshipper in a way conducive to the attainment of the highest human values and the knowledge of God that leads to liberation. *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* of the *Yajur-veda* (2, 9, 1) gives for the first time eleven dhyāna-gāyatrīs employed for the meditation and worship of Rudra-Śiva in the last iṣṭakā of the agnicayana. There it is not merely an oblation in consecrated fire, but the cityāgni is worshipped as the Divine Person preceded by Śatarudriyahoma. The first Gāyatrī given in the Upaniṣad occurs there.

This, the first Gāyatrī given here, is addressed to Rudra-Mahādeva. The name Rudra is described as the power that rules knowledge and wisdom. Rudra is Jñānādātā and as such He is the guide of the whole universe. As Virāt He is myriad-eyed and He is the *Puruṣa* pervading all creation. Mahādeva is the usual name by which His unrivalled divine nature is denoted. The aspirant after mokṣa or final beatitude expresses his longing to know the Supreme by the use of verb in the potential mood. Again the same mood used in connection with the meditation implies that even the desire to meditate is engendered only through prayer to the Supreme for its gain. The use of the verbs in the first person plural in all these Gāyatrī formulas is also specially noteworthy. Man is gregarious by nature. He can hardly rise above the moral and spiritual level attained by the collectivity to which he belongs. It is, therefore, necessary for every religious aspirant that while he strives for the uplift of his own self he should also be remembering the whole community to which he belongs so that all may be raised above the previous level. This great truth is implied in the plural expressions, 'May we know' and 'May we meditate'. The supplication implied in the last verb finally points out that the worshipper owes his approach to God solely to the impulse granted by God Himself. In all the Gāyatrīs that follow the same motivation runs centrally. These Gāyatrīs are repeated in japa for purity of mind accompanied by meditation on the deity indicated. *Puruṣa* contained in this Rudra Gāyatrī may imply that all deities may be invoked by a votary with the same mantra which is connected with his iṣṭa or chosen ideal considering them as non-different from Him. In one text examined the first line is found as तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे. This alteration makes the line a regular Gāyatrī line. Otherwise the whole passage is not in Gāyatrī metre, but in pura uṣṇik. The grammatical structure of these formulas vary widely from standard usage by interchanges of case-endings and verbal terminations.]

तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे महादेवाय धीमहि । तन्नो रुद्रः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २३ ॥

तं आगमप्रसिद्धैर्धर्मैः पुरुषाकारं महादेवं वयं जानीम । तस्य ज्ञानार्थं तं महादेवं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्यानविषये ज्ञानदाता रुद्रः अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

तत् (for तस्मै) पुरुषाय that Supreme Person well known in the scriptures विद्महे may we know, realize. महादेवाय that Mahādeva, the highest among gods धीमहि may we meditate. तत् in that meditation रुद्रः Rudra नः us प्रचोदयात् impel.

23. May we know or realize the Supreme Person. For that, may we meditate upon Mahādeva and to that meditation may Rudra impel us.

[NOTES—This Tatpuruṣa Gāyatrī is not noted by Bhaṭṭabhāskara perhaps thinking that it is duplicate of the previous mantra. Sāyaṇa accepts it and informs us that this Gāyatrī is a prayer addressed to Rudra visualized as,

विभ्रद्गोभिः कुठारं मृगमभयवरौ सुप्रसन्नो महेशः
सर्वलिङ्गारदीप्तः सरसिजनिलयो व्याघ्रचर्मतिवासः ।
ध्येयो मुक्तापरागाभृतरसकलिताद्रिप्रभः पञ्चवक्त्रः
त्र्यक्षः कोटीरकोटीकलिततुहिनरुचिः कलौत्तुङ्गमौलिः ॥

in *Prapañcasūtra* 27. 41. This contemplative verse gives in concise language the characteristics of *Tatpuruṣa Mahādeva* as worshipped in the images. The term *Puruṣa*, *Mahādeva* and *Rudra* are epithets of the same Divine Person implying His personality and spiritual characteristics.]

तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे वक्रतुण्डाय धीमहि । तन्नो दन्तिः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २४ ॥

तं पुरुषं जानीम । तदर्थं कुटिलनासिकं ध्यायेम । महादेवः स विघ्नेशः दन्ती तस्मिन् ध्याने अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

24. May we know the Supreme Person. For that may we meditate upon Vakratuṇḍa. May Danti impel us towards it.

[NOTES—In all Gāyatrīs three epithets and three acts, namely, knowledge, meditation and impelling are to be connected. In this Viṣṇeśa Gāyatrī employed in the worship of Īśvara, the Supreme Person is represented as elephant-faced having a bent trunk and an excellent tusk. *Vakratuṇḍa* and *Danti* are the names of Vināyaka. *Dantiḥ* is the Vedic form of *Danti*.]

तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे चक्रतुण्डाय धीमहि । तन्नो नन्दिः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २५ ॥

तं दिव्यपुरुषविग्रहं जानीम । तदर्थं चक्रतुण्डं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने अस्मान् नन्दिः प्रचोदयतु ॥

25. May we know the Divine Person. For that may we meditate upon Cakratuṇḍa. May Nandi impel us towards it.

[NOTES—Here the epithets *Puruṣa* and *Cakratuṇḍa* refer to Nandikeśvara, the servant, seat and vehicle of Śiva. Being one endowed with occult powers, he is capable of assuming human shape as a puruṣa. He is called *Cakratuṇḍa* as he wielded the weapon known as *Cakra*, discus, while Śiva was engaged in a battle with demons by grasping it with the mouth. This Gāyatrī and the next one are not in the shorter version commented by Bhaṭṭabhāskara.]

तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे महासेनाय धीमहि । तन्नः षण्मुखः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २६ ॥

तं पुरुषं जानीम । तदर्थं महासेनं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने अस्मान् षण्मुखः प्रचोदयतु ॥

26. May we know that Divine Person. For that may we meditate upon Mahāsenā. May Śaṅmukha impel us towards it.

[NOTES—This is a prayer addressed to Kārtikeya who is represented as having six faces and as the general of the celestial army.]

तत्पुरुषाय विद्महे सुवर्णपक्षाय धीमहि । तन्नो गरुडः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २७ ॥

तं पुरुषं जानीम । तदर्थं सुवर्णपक्षं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने गरुडः अस्मान् प्रचोदयतु ॥

27. May we know that Divine Person. For that may we meditate on Suvarṇapakṣa. May Garuḍa impel us towards it.

[NOTES—This Garuḍa-Gāyatrī represents Garuḍa as having golden wings. The name *Garuḍa* is traced to the root *gr* meaning to swallow—*sarpāṇām giraṇāt*.]

वेदात्मनाय विद्महे हिरण्यगर्भाय धीमहि । तन्नो ब्रह्म प्रचोदयात् ॥ २८ ॥

वेदात्मकं ब्रह्म वयं जानीम । तदर्थं हिरण्यगर्भं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने ब्रह्म अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

28. May we know the Veda, embodied as the four-faced Brahmā. For that may we meditate upon Hiraṇyagarbha. May Brahman impel us towards it.

[NOTES—This is a prayer addressed to Brahman. Some texts read *Brahma* as neuter singular while others have masculine singular *Brahmā*. Sāyaṇa considers this as *Parama Gāyatrī* and explains it thus: Through the strenuous study of Vedānta as a resident student in the place of the preceptor may we know Brahman, the Highest Reality, also expressed in the Vedic scriptures, Having known that Reality may we continually meditate upon that unlimited Truth day and night identifying It with ourselves. *Vedātmana* is a Vedic deviation for *Vedātmaka*. The four-faced Brahmā named Hiraṇyagarbha and the Vedic lore are but the expressions of the Supreme Reality which, as the impelling spirit, influences one to do acts meritorious or otherwise.]

नारायणाय विद्महे वासुदेवाय धीमहि । तन्नो विष्णुः प्रचोदयात् ॥ २९ ॥

नारायणं जानीम । तदर्थं वासुदेवं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने विष्णुः अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

29. May we know Nārāyaṇa. For that may we meditate upon Vāsudeva. May Viṣṇu impel us towards it.

[NOTES—The Highest Person is here supplicated as Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Viṣṇu. Until and unless He impels the individual soul, it cannot contemplate Him and without contemplation on Him, His true nature cannot be understood. The etymological meanings of the three epithets are given at length in bhāṣyas on the *Gītā* and *Viṣṇusahasranāma*. Bhaṭṭabhāskara's explanation of these words in the Viṣṇu Gāyatrī is noteworthy. He derives *Nārāyaṇa* thus: The term Nara, being derived from the root *Nṛ* to lead, means the leader of all creation. Nāra derived from the above word denotes his offsprings. Nārāyaṇa, therefore, is the effective cause of all creatures. Thus Nārāyaṇa is Paramātmān. He is called Vāsudeva in his immanent aspect, i.e., dwelling in all creatures as Antaryāmin. The term Viṣṇu implies His all-pervasiveness.]

वज्रनखाय विद्महे' तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्राय धीमहि । तन्नो नारसिंहः प्रचोदयात् ॥ ३० ॥

वज्रनखं जानीम । तदर्थं तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्रं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने नारसिंहः अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

30. May we know Vajranakha. For that may we meditate upon Tīkṣṇa-damṣṭra. May Nārasimha impel us towards it.

[NOTES—This is a prayer to Nārasimha. The lengthening of the vowel on the first letter of the word Nārasimha makes no difference in the meaning, namely Man-lion God. Being partly leonine He has sharp eye-teeth and diamond-hard nails.]

भास्कराय विद्महे' महद्युतिकराय धीमहि । तन्नो आदित्यः प्रचोदयात् ॥ ३१ ॥

भास्करं जानीम । तदर्थं महाद्युतिकरं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने आदित्यः अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

31. May we know Bhāskara. For that may we meditate upon the great-light-producer. May Āditya impel us towards it.

[NOTES—Bhāskara literally means light-giver. The sun is believed to be the child of Aditi, mother of all gods, naturalistically the limitless sky. *Mahadyutikara* in grammatical Sanskrit must be *Mahādyutikara*.]

वैश्वानराय विद्महे' लालीलाय धीमहि । तन्नो अग्निः प्रचोदयात् ॥ ३२ ॥

वैश्वानरं जानीम । तदर्थं लालीलं ध्यायेम । तस्मिन् ध्याने अग्निः अस्मान् प्रेरयतु ॥

32. May we know Vaiśvānara. For that may we meditate upon Lālīla. May Agni impel us towards that.

[NOTES—This is Agni Gāyatrī. Fire is called *Vaiśvānara* because He is favourable to all men by helping their cooking and worship. विश्वेभ्यो नरेभ्यो हितः । Nārāyaṇa explains in the *Dīpikā* that fire is called Lālīla, because oblations are licked up by flickering flames. He equates the word Lālīla with *lelāyamāna* in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*. By attracting the syllable *he* of *vidmahe* some take the word *helālīla* and explain it as implying the private sport of Fire-God (*helā*) and His play in the universe as the Supreme God (*līlā*).]

(to be continued)

The Upanishads, or the Vedānta, or the Aranyakas, or Rahasya, is the name of this portion (Jñāna-kāṇḍa) of the Vedas. Here we find at once that religion has got rid of all external formalities. Here we find at once that spiritual things are told not in the language of matter, but in the language of the superfine. No more any grossness attaches to it, no more is there any compromise with things of worldly concern. Bold, brave, beyond the conception of the present day, stand the giant minds of the sages of the Upanishads, declaring the noblest truths that have ever been preached to humanity, without any fear. This, my countrymen, I want to lay before you. Even the Jñāna-kāṇḍa of the Vedas is a vast ocean; many lives are necessary to understand even a little of it. Truly has it been said of the Upanishads by Ramanuja that they form the head, the shoulders, the crest of the Vedas, and surely enough the Upanishads have become the Bible of modern India.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

S. C. SEN GUPTA

Thou didst doubt and doubt,
And restless didst thou wander up and down, asking
'Is It near me or is It far inland
Is It hid in the flowers of my garden
Or is It lying sunk in the ocean
Or is It in the stars of heaven
Or has It, has It a being?'

Thy queries were without end
Put by an eager heart in pain,
And with thee this questioning was a passion,
Not a fashion as 'tis now with some—
And thy search was not for gold and diamond
Nor was it a discovery of a land
Or a law hidden!
And thou didst not envy a Columbus' fame or a Newton's
At last didst thou run on from man to man
Famed to have thy object won:
Thy stars smiled on thee at last,
And led thee to Dakshineshwaram
As in the days of yore were led from the East
The Wisemen to Bethlehem;
Thy doubts still remained
'Where is He? Hast thou seen Him?'
Were still the questions strong.
'Yea', 'I have seen', 'I have seen',
Was the answer given.
'As I see thee, so have I seen,
And I may show thee too the Vision.'

So came to thee the Touch and the Vision
Thy doubts did then vanish
As does the mist before the Sun,
And thou wert at last changed
From the doubting seeker in pain
Into the devotee at rest and calm,
From Narendranath unknown into Vivekananda of fame.
And so was the change wrought
By no magician mean.

STHITAPRAJNASYA BHASHA

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

Revered Mahapurush Maharaj (Swami Sivananda) came to the Gadadhar Ashrama on April 1, 1925, to attend the worship of Sri Annapurna. This made all the monks and devotees of the Ashrama very happy. In the morning we went, and, after prostrating ourselves before him, sat nearby. He made enquiries about everyone's welfare and asked for *prasada* to be given us all. Bibhuti Babu (Bar-at-Law) arrived a short while later. In the course of conversation, Maharaj said to him: 'We are Indians. Our ideal is plain living and high thinking. It is enough if we get simple food and clothing. What does it matter if we don't drive in a car? Don't you see how worldly people take so much pains to procure things for enjoyment but die even before a few days pass? So much name and fame all come to naught. Newspapers possibly write some obituary note about him and there ends the matter! But the goal of human life is to attain Him; otherwise everything is in vain. But such is the *maya* of Mahamaya that in no way do we realize this. Even though people are dying every day, do the others become aware that they will also die one day? Even for that there is a reason. Swamiji used to say: "How do we understand death? What exactly is death? The Atman in us is undecaying and immortal. Verily it is deathless. Therefore even the sight of death doesn't strike us, for death pertains to the body only." Swamiji said thus in America.'

At this time a friend of ours came and prostrated himself before Maharaj and asked feelingly how lust could be conquered. With great affection Maharaj said to him: 'You can conquer it with your strong will power itself. If you have really understood that lust is harmful to you, why should you give it any indulgence? It must be kept under control. Very strong determination is necessary and at the same time God's grace also is required. If you have a resolute mind and



Swami Sivananda

if you pray to Him, this enemy can be easily controlled through His grace.'

Another gentleman present there asked him, 'Maharaj, what should be the duty of a man who is willing to renounce the world but is forbidden by his parents?'

Maharaj: 'Well, then don't renounce the world. If, however, real detachment and yearning for realizing God come to you, you won't incur any sin for renouncing the world. On the contrary, if you renounce the world only for the sake of your stomach and indolence, surely then will you incur sin. For, the parents who reared you up so long also expect some service from you. And it wouldn't do to deny this to them. Very rarely one comes across a young man imbued with a real spirit of renunciation. My child, don't be in a hurry to renounce the world. Yearn for devotion to and faith in God. When time is ripe, He Himself will draw you out; it will be difficult then to remain in the world. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Blood comes out if the scale of a sore is removed forcibly, but when the sore dries up, the scale falls off

by itself." Don't be anxious for a mere piece of red cloth. What matters is devotion to and faith in God. If it is not there, a man may continue for a few days through the impetus of the first flush of renunciation, that is all. Take His name, do His work and in time you will see that He will set everything right and provide you with unlimited joy. We bless you whole-heartedly that He may give you discrimination and detachment and you may have abundant peace in life. What more shall I say, my child ?'

In the meantime, Jagadish Sen, a friend of his (Mahapurush Maharaj's) early days, came in. He continued to unburden his worldly woes and shed tears. While listening to him intently, Mahapurush Maharaj felt extremely sorry at his griefstricken condition. It was time for going to office. Devotees prostrated themselves before him while taking leave and Maharaj blessed them all.

After office hours, the devotees again gathered together at night in the Ashrama with the hope of meeting Mahapurush Maharaj, who was taking rest. We made our obeisance to him and took our seats.

Maharaj : 'Peace will surely then come to the world when all will have a sense of unity and more or less the same feeling and when selfishness will wane. Then alone peace will reign on earth. All suffering is due to this selfishness. The League of Nations and whatever else you say are all useless. When our mentality will change and we shall consider ourselves as the children of a common Father, then only our feeling of hatred will go and real peace will come. With the advent of Sri Ramakrishna the mentality of all people is changing and the indications of the Golden Age are becoming discernible. The *sattvic* quality is being manifested through the quality of *rajas*. There is no other way, for Nature, the Primordial Power, has been stirred up. We feel it very well. That is why in every country there is the manifestation of real power. The Master practised severe spiritual disciplines for twelve years and it must bear fruit. For, his *sadhana* was meant for the good of the world. He had no necessity of doing it for his own sake. There are

such great souls even now who always work selflessly and undertake spiritual disciplines for the good of the world.' All kept silent on hearing Mahapurush Maharaj speak thus. A wonderfully grave atmosphere prevailed in the room.

Bibhuti Babu came in. On seeing him Maharaj said, 'Hallo Bibhuti, have you forgotten us completely ? Why don't you go to the Math ? Do go there. Practise at the Bar for a few years and then get yourself engaged in the Master's work.' Bibhuti Babu's friend remarked, 'Already married, what can Bibhuti do now ?'

Maharaj : 'What does it matter ? Now the combination of the two powers can work better. He will drag his wife also to this good work. Really, if women are brought into the field of activity, they can work well. What is the drawback in women ? They learn as they are desired by men. If they are given proper education, they progress very soon and well. They possess a good amount of feeling, devotion and faith. You do nothing for them, Should they be merely cooking in your homes ? All of you should encourage them well and then only they will do really good work and become blessed.'

Now the talk turned to the Ashrama. In the course of the talk, Rev. Lalit Maharaj said, 'These young men help me much.'

Maharaj : 'That's right ; this is a good work. It is very good to be of service in the work of the Master. See, in this world all people work for themselves ; but he is a real man who works for others. It is verily the duty of man to help others. Otherwise, you see, even the birds and beasts also eat and feed their young ones. If man also works only for himself, then how is he different from them ? The duty of man is to help his fellow-beings. That is why Swamiji introduced the scheme of service. "He who loves all creatures well, serves the Creator Himself."'

In the course of talk a devotee asked what suffering was. Maharaj said, 'What Kamakhya Babu has written about pessimism is very fine. You should read that paper.' Saying this he praised it much and added : 'All are anxious to get peace but man fails to

discover where this peace is. So he catches hold of this and that and suffers. In God alone is peace. But to get that peace, people have to take the help of this very suffering. A man renounces the world; that means he also is searching for peace. He did not attain peace in what he sought for it. So he

renounces his home, takes refuge in God and thereby finds real peace.'

It was about 10 p.m. All of us slowly prostrated ourselves before Mahapurush Maharaj, and, receiving his affectionate blessings, returned home in profound peace. Maharaj, too, retired then for rest.

SAMANWAYA ASHRAM OR THE TECHNIQUE OF SOCIAL SYNTHESIS

ACHARYA VINOBA BHAVE

When I left Bihar, I had two things in mind. In the first place, I felt that something must be done to ensure continuity of the social service which the Bhoodan movement had inaugurated. This was calculated to strengthen the movement. Secondly, it was necessary to set up some institution which would provide a concrete demonstration of our fundamental outlook. The Sarva Seva Sangha, by shifting its central offices to Gaya, ensured continuity of the work that was under way. The idea of the Samanwaya Ashram was conceived for the fulfilment of the second objective. I had been nursing the idea for several years in my mind, but it was only the work in Bihar which imparted it the necessary impetus and created a congenial atmosphere for giving it shape.

Samanwaya, the synthetic outlook which expresses itself in the philosophy and art of synthesis, is the bed-rock on which Indian social progress has been built. It has been our mainstay. India has tried ever to assimilate the good in all those who come from abroad either as refugees to seek shelter or as aggressors. This assimilation has contributed to the continuous enrichment of her culture. What we witness today in this country is Vedic culture

in its developed form. The seed that we see in the Vedas has developed into the splendid fruit of Bharata-dharma or the Indian 'Law of Life'. It has gained in grandeur since the days of the Vedas and also since the days of the Upanishads. This Dharma or the Eternal Law of our Being is a dynamic principle. The old scriptures command our reverence because the fundamentals of our culture are embedded in them. But modern Indian thought is richer and more magnificent than ancient thought. The modern *Sthitaprajna* or the man who has attained equanimity of spirit, is far more advanced than his counterpart in ancient times. All this is the result of the art of Samanwaya, the art of resolving contradictions and the technique of reconciling differences. We assimilated all that was good in other cultures and eschewed all that was bad. This process should go on unhampered even today.

Modern Indian culture has enriched itself by assimilating all that was good in Islam, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism and Jainism and has been developed into its present comprehensive stature. Islam in India is different from Islam in other lands, just as Indian

Christianity is different in some important respects from Christianity in other parts of the world. The secret of this comprehensiveness is the philosophy of *Brahma-vidya* or the philosophy of the all-pervading absolute principle, the reverence for all life as its necessary corollary. Thus this process of harmonization has been constantly going on in India.

I had been feeling the necessity of some centre where the philosophy of Samanwaya or synthetic life could be studied, and where experiments in translating those principles into practice could be carried on. The *sadhakas* or aspirants for the realization of this life, who made this centre their abode, would strive to remove such shortcomings as were found in the old method of *sadhana* or discipline for a liberated life.

Bodh Gaya naturally occurred to me as the most likely place. People from all parts of the world visit Bodh Gaya. This will naturally provide the *sadhakas* with an opportunity to learn and absorb all that is good in other cultures, besides providing an opportunity for offering the visitors our humble services. Surendraji (the person in charge of the Bodh Gaya Samanwaya Ashram) has written to say that savants and devout men come to Bodh Gaya from abroad. Surendraji expresses his reverence for them by offering them the only raised seat in his otherwise bare room, and listens to their talk reverently. Much illuminating exchange of thoughts usually takes place. It gladdens my heart to learn this. But it should be our attempt that people who come to Bodh Gaya should be able to see the Sarvodaya way of life actually lived there in its purest form. It is not the bulk that counts. It is the quality that matters.

The first thing necessary is a re-orientation of our cult of contemplation. The Indian technique of contemplation is the

most advanced indeed. Perhaps it has been equalled only by the Sufis, if at all. I speak subject to correction. In our country it has been the traditional belief that contemplation runs counter to action. Those who engage themselves in contemplation, for the most part, abstain from action, because it was believed that action proves an obstruction in calm meditation. Others who resorted to the way of action, rendered these *Dhyanayogis* such practical aid as the latter needed. Both were mutually complementary. Since men of action could not practise contemplation, they deemed it their sacred duty to accept responsibility for the protection and maintenance of the men of contemplation, who felt contented with the belief that they rendered such service as no one else could.

I have always been of the opinion that the traditional notion that action comes in the way of contemplation is not true, and it needs to be corrected. Just as a man can attain to a state of complete concentration or mental poise by abstaining from all actions, so also should he be able to maintain his mental poise in the midst of action. I have some personal experience of this. Up till now abstention from activity and retirement to some solitary place was regarded an essential condition for concentration. This may be necessary in preliminary stages, but it does not help progress in concentration. The best concentration is achieved when one is constantly engaged in action without being conscious of the activity of action. Our breathing does not interfere with meditation. On the other hand, if it is controlled and well-balanced, it is a great help. In the same way non-exploiting productive physical labour and silent, serene, sweet contemplation done in a spirit of non-opposition to all, can always go together. Such actions need

not interfere with contemplation. A new orientation of *Dhyanayoga* from this point of view, is urgently called for. Then alone will our traditional way of meditation be complete.

One other thing is that unless we have a band of workers, who will undertake a perpetual pilgrimage of service, knowledge cannot be kept flowing in society like a perennial stream. Unless the *sadhakas* accept this life of perpetual pilgrimage, they will not be able to conquer their attachment. Therefore it seems to me that a class of perpetual pilgrims is indispensable to any scheme of social welfare. The order of wandering anchorites initiated by Jainism, Buddhism, Sankara and Ramanuja, has proved of great significance from this point of view. They carried on this experiment for centuries, and it gained momentum as it progressed. Their influence on the people, on the state, on art and literature and for the matter of that, on every sphere of life, was profound, and it lasted for several years. India owes much of her glory to them. But these experiments suffered from a serious defect. There was no place for productive labour in their scheme of life. These wandering pilgrims were not indolent. For they were constantly marching. They went to the extent of saying that God had created the night for contemplation and the day for propagating knowledge. This implied that God had ordained no time for rest. In my judgement, so long as a man has to eat, he must take part in productive labour, even if it be symbolic. Old pilgrim hermits regarded eating as a part of their daily religious performance, and they did not believe that he who eats must take part in productive labour. They lived by begging.

We seek to remedy this defect. If they lived on charity, we also live on

charity. I know that it is charity that will sustain us. To me the institution of begging in this sense is sacred. Those wandering hermits rendered valuable service even on their begging rounds. They had, therefore, a right to alms. But, with us a faith in productive physical labour must be a fundamental article of our social philosophy, and not only a rule of good conduct. We must combine this faith with our dependence on charity. But faith in productive labour must be placed in the same category as our fundamental principles of truth and non-violence. We must make it an integral part of the life of these permanent pilgrims on the march. In my view, productive labour is *Brahma-karma*, man's supreme duty, and it must be performed with the attitude of non-opposition towards all. We are thus freed from such exploitation as we may be unwittingly guilty of.

The third suggestion that I want to make is in no way a novel one. The first two are the result of my own deep thinking, but the third is a present to us by the age of science. If any credit is due for this to any individual, it is to Gandhiji. The third suggestion that I want to make is that all our *sadhana*, that is, efforts for personal and social salvation, must be collective. It does not mean that some twenty or twenty-five people should come together and make collective efforts. Collective effort indicated that social life is the only life. Individual life should be considered real life only to the extent to which it is a part and parcel of social life. There can be no isolated personal existence in society. Life apart from society will mean in the best sense of the term, a life of liberation, and in its worst sense, it will mean death. That life which is sequestered from society, is no life at all. Life is essentially social. Our body itself is a

sort of social organization. That is why there is life in it. If we put it to pieces by cutting off the nose, ears, eyes and other limbs, life will be extinct in those scattered parts. Society constitutes life and we enjoy life only to the extent to which we participate in social life.

Take, for instance, the quality of renunciation. Whether it is good or bad or how far it is good and how far it is bad, will have to be considered in the perspective of the whole society. We will have to consider what the society needs. If one indulges in renunciation in a degree which exceeds what is socially wholesome, he either becomes a one-sided specialist or some sort of deformity creeps into his life. We have, therefore, to consider every quality in terms of its bearing on social life. Our whole effort for self-realization should be social in character. These three characteristics should distinguish our modern culture. The kind of activities in which we may have to engage for the harmonious development of these characteristics are many and varied.

In choosing Bodh Gaya as the seat of Samanwaya Ashram, I had some four or five things in view: (1) If thefts occur around Bodh Gaya, we must confess that our work has proved a failure. The abuses that disfigure our social life today must be eradicated from the vicinity of Bodh Gaya. We need not choose a very large field for action. Let us be content with a limited area. Even if the light be small, it dispels all darkness in its limited orbit. Whether a light be big or small, what is expected is that there will be no darkness in its presence. The object of our service should be qualitative progress. (2) *Sadhakas* or social workers, who will live in this centre, are expected to have a sense of balance in life. They should avoid all extremes and eccentricities.

They will depend on productive physical labour for their maintenance. Such money as is received in the shape of financial help shall not be spent on the maintenance of the *sadhakas*. They must earn their livelihood by physical labour, and if any contribution has to be invited, let these contributions be in the form of physical labour. I know that the houses that have to be built there cannot be built with the help of labour contributions. We are not working under ideal conditions. (3) There is a serious defect in our culture. It is a defect in our modern culture and not of our ancient culture. Though we have a sense of personal cleanliness, we have no sense of social hygiene. Let us, therefore, make it a point to keep the surroundings of Bodh Gaya immaculately clean. If we can give a good account of ourselves in this respect, visitors to Bodh Gaya will experience a pleasing sense of social cleanliness. They will forget the trouble of their journey. We will have rendered them some substantial service, and they will have a concrete demonstration of our outlook on life. Cleaning our surroundings must be regarded as a part of our daily rites of sacrificial work. (4) There should always be an exchange of notes with visitors from abroad. We should offer them our humble hospitality, and profit by their company. Service will thus impart a flavour to cultural contact. (5) I also feel that for the workers of Bihar, Bodh Gaya should become a veritable haven of repose. They should be able to imbibe imperceptibly from the atmosphere a spirit of non-attachment and gain some mental equipoise. They may of course take part in physical labour for an hour or two. But, in the main, the Ashram must provide for them a retreat for shaking off all attachment.

In addition to all this, I have asked the Sarva Seva Sangha to set up a permanent exhibition in the Samanwaya Ashram to give a concrete idea of the

basic principles of a Sarvodaya social order, and to make special provision for giving practical demonstration in spinning, weaving and village industries.

SRIDAM

DILIP KUMAR ROY

(continued from the previous issue)

A silence fell. Then smiling
 Queen Rukmini said to the King:
 'Now that you are unmasked, Lord,
 We know you will start to sing
 'And play the flute and dance on,
 Seeming to forget all,
 And make us all forget, too.
 The world's lights that call and call!
 'Since the dawn of Time, O Elusive
 Enchanter of the heart!
 This has been your wont who visit
 Each time to play a new part,
 'Which to all but yourself is fathomless
 We only know: we are yours
 Who come in various guises
 To knock and knock at our doors.
 'But then we are told: we, earthlings,
 Are loath, Lord, you to hail!
 But is it fair, we ask—when
 You are loath to discard your veil?
 'Pray think: your erstwhile comrade,
 Whom as your guest you acclaim,
 You not once asked how he prospered
 Or what was his wife's name.
 'It may well be he comes for something
 Their children urgently need:
 But you never gave him an opening!
 A strange compassion, indeed!
 'I am sure, Lord, you could help him:
 Can aught hinder if you would give?
 But you started extolling the Guru's
 Great Grace his disciples receive!
 'Has he trudged all this way, I wonder,
 To learn what already he knows?
 So he said with a sigh I echo:
 "The eternal child never grows!"

'But how could I?' Lord Krishna laughed.
 He was too shy, tongue-tied:
 So to break the ice I raced on, hoping he'd in
 me confide:
 But if I failed, whose fault was that? I
 wooed him with all my art,
 In vain: not once he met me half-way, nor
 once played his part.
 He was silent as the abyss. But let that
 pass. Now, Sridam, be
 Expansive—nay, but tell me first: What
 have you got for me?
 Dear friend, you must have for an old friend
 a lovely present brought:
 You, who were generous to a fault, could
 hardly have forgot—
 Ah, here's your wallet! I presume you have
 got here something sweet
 And precious—and I know 'twas offered by
 your spouse. Do greet
 Her thoughtful self on our behalf—you ratify.
 my Queen?
 Look, here's the sweetest, whitest, purest
 rice you ever have seen!
 And how it simply melts in the mouth!
 Beloved! Oh, do try!
 But snatching from his hand the wallet,
 she said laughingly:
 'Enough, my gracious Lord! once you accept
 what he has brought,
 He's blessed—was there ever a manikin
 who knew it not?
 So it shall hence stay in my keeping: all
 who'll come to me,
 Will partake of this as your *prasād*, and bless
 him gratefully.
 But now I leave you to your friend since he
 may feel too shy

'For luxury being the snare of snares,
 Perhaps, if I grew rich, my soul's
 Deep aspiration might be quenched
 And I would miss the Goal of goals :
 'The Haven of your dawn-rose feet.
 Give—this I never may forget.
 Even if I starve from birth to birth,
 May I only on Thy will, Lord, wait.'

* * *

His trance was broken. The charioteer
 Said : 'Here's your happy hamlet, but
 Although this alley bears your name,
 O great saint, I can see no hut.'
 The Brahmin stared and stared wide-eyed :
 For on the precise spot where his
 Cottage once stood he only saw
 A sumptuous palace ! 'What is this ?'
 He mused, perplexed : 'Am I awake
 Or dreaming ? For how can it be ?
 Surely, my little hut was here,
 Where a palace is all I can see !'
 Alighting from his carriage, now
 He entered the portal, marvelling :
 A gleaming garden ! A rippling lake !
 White swans swimming ! None but a King
 Could such a royal mansion own !
 There....men and women's voices gay
 Came wafted on the breezes' wings !....
 He saw some antelopes in play,
 And plumaged peacocks proudly strut !....
 He shook his head and turned round—when
 He started : a familiar voice
 Blithely accosted him, and then
 Two loving arms twined round his neck....
 He shivered, amazed....for it was she,
 His wife, all smiles, but how transformed :
 A figure arrayed resplendently
 In shining silk and glittering jewels !
 With a cry he sprang back—for who knew :
 Perhaps it was a sorceress
 Who, decked out thus, had come to woo
 And wean him from his virtue ! Seared,
 He cried : 'O Lord ! Come, save me now
 From this your maya.' The other laughed :
 'But do, beloved, tell me, how
 'You could take me for His maya ? Look :
 Do I not heave as large as life ?

Can raiments change a woman so ?
 Fie ! Am I not the self-same wife
 'Of yours who rightly counselled you
 To implore our great Lord Krishna's Grace ?
 And because to Him you did appeal,
 He came our suffering to redress.'
 Sridam stayed silent, deeply moved,
 With bowed head, till his soft eyes filled
 Then, meeting her loving gaze, he said :
 'But nay, my love, I never appealed
 'To Him for a material boon,
 How could I—when He came to embrace
 Me, His eternal slave, and then
 Squandered on me such tenderness !
 'This your petition He has heard
 Because, beloved, you begged for me,
 Because you suffered to see me starve
 In a chronic, hopeless poverty.
 'You are thrice-blessed, O my dear
 And faithful spouse, who cried for me !
 Whose agonized prayer winged to Him,
 Our Lord, and so, compassionately
 'He willed this palace into being
 And changed you into a faery Queen.
 But I, too, am blessed to have a mate
 Whose heart's cry moved the Evergreen.
 'Only, my love, I am afraid
 Lest all this wealth and luxury
 Deflect us from His Grace we call
 To be absolved everlastingly.'
 She smiled and said : 'Beloved mine !
 For once you are wrong. For does one need
 To pray to Him to be fulfilled ?
 'Tis not to remind Him that we plead,
 'But only to open the more our hearts,
 Through supplication, to His Grace,
 We only pray to be attuned
 To His Flute-note of blessedness,
 'That our listless hearts may wake athrill,
 Resonant to His melodies,
 And lastly, we can pray because
 Our prayers reflect His harmonies.
 'But why say: only they do pray
 To Him who pray with words and songs ?
 When all that is prays all the time
 And for His benediction longs ?

Behold : the desiccated clod,
 The sun-scorched field, the leafless bower
 The thin stream flowing listlessly,
 The dying grass, the fading flower :
 'They cannot say for what they pine,
 But He, as cloud, knows in the sky,
 And yearns to answer the earth, even as
 She yearns to appeal to Him on high.
 'All all we cherish here below
 Are but His boons: the light the breeze,
 The grains and fruits that sustain life,
 The rivers that our thirst appease.

'Only, alas, we seldom ache
 To meet in all our All-in-all.
 It is to know Him as our soul.
 We learn to pray and love to call.
 'But even when we claim—we call
 To Him in love, we fail to see
 That 'tis because He calls to us,
 We dare call Him insistently.
 'So dread no more what He vouchsafes,
 But let us sing : all all is His.
 How can we ever miss His Grace
 If His gifts we receive on bended knees ? '
(concluded)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, MY MASTER

(REMINISCENCES)

SWAMI SADASIVANANDA

(continued from the November '54 issue)

RAJA OF BHINGA MEETS THE SWAMI

The Raja of Bhinga was a big Jagirdar near Lucknow who knew both English and Sanskrit very well, and had taken a vow to spend the rest of his life in Banaras, and never would go out of the bounds, not only of the town but even outside his own garden house. His aim was to end his days in Bhinga palace near the Durga temple of Banaras. He was a Sadhaka and lived like a Sannyasin. When he learnt about Swamiji's arrival, he sent Swami Govindanandaji to him with presents of fruits, flowers and sweets. Swami Sivananda was also present there. Swami Govindananda addressed both of them with 'Namo Narayana' and took his seat. He told them about the vow of the Raja of Bhinga, but added : 'The Maharaja desires to see you. If you permit him, he will come here in spite of his sacred vow not to come out of the garden.' Swamiji was perceptibly moved and said at once, 'No, no, that will never be. It

is wrong to ask to break his vow. I shall go there myself; the Raja need not come here.' Next day or the day after he went with Swami Govindananda and Swami Sivananda to see the Raja in his garden.

The Raja said : 'You are a great soul—like Buddha and Sankara.' The entire conversation was marked with this kind of high respect and devotion for the Swami and he discussed the Sastras as well as Karma. The Raja was an ardent worker in the earlier part of his life and he entreated the Swami to start some mission of service in Banaras and promised to bear its expenses. Swamiji's health was not good and he could not promise. He only said : 'I am now going back to Belur Math and then I shall concentrate more on work, when my health permits.' After various other discussions, Swamiji and Swami Sivananda returned to the 'Sondhabas'.

Next day the Raja of Bhinga sent a closed envelop containing a cheque of

Rs. 500/- and a letter through a courier as a mark of respect. Swamiji addressed to Mahapurush Maharaj (Swami Sivananda) who was near him, 'Mahapurush, you please start a Math of Sri Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) in Banaras with this money.' Thus a garden was taken on rent and Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama was established there in July. The site was later on purchased and a permanent Math was built up at that very place.

THE SWAMI ON SUPERNATURAL POWERS

One day Sri Kalidas Mitra, son of the late Babu Pramada Das Mitra, came to see the Swami at about 5 p. m. His father was a friend of the Swami, with whom he and his other Gurubhais had been guests more than once. The Swami was quite pleased to meet the son of his old friend. Swamiji wore a loin-cloth, a woollen sweater and woollen hose as it was the month of February. The Swami took his seat on the carpet. Swami Sivananda, Charu Babu, myself and others took their seats near him and we listened intently to whatever fell from his lips. I was young and not more than twenty and could not remember everything that he uttered that day, but still the picture is vividly in the memory even now, when about half a century has passed.

The high and pure souls often answer the very questions that a person thinks in his heart even before he utters a word. The Swami did the same that evening. Once in London before he delivered his lecture, the Swami, suddenly facing the audience, said, 'Each of you may write any question on a slip of paper and keep it in your pocket. There is no need of passing them to me and I shall answer each of them.' When they did so, the Swami turned to the right and told: 'Your question is this.' Then seeing that a gentleman on his left waited eagerly to

hear him say about his question too, the Swami turned to the left and did the same and then went on giving the details of his house, its contents, inmates and of what they were doing at that moment and so on. The person in question, as well as everybody else were astounded at this miraculous vision and the Swami thus demonstrated on about the questions of six or eight men and their houses etc.

Jesus had this extraordinary power. Here was a man from India who could do the same. Everyone thought with awe, fear and reverence who was this person and how could he know the facts of their private life. The subject was Raja-Yoga for that night and Swamiji explained when the mind was sublimated above the normal material consciousness, the ordinary space and distance and flesh and solids before us could not obstruct the vision—and that the mind could then reflect any scene, the ears could hear and the eyes see in spite of miles separating the subject and the object of concentration. The eight Siddhis do really come to the aspirant when practising this high order of Yoga, but he should not try to utilize them for his benefit, else the still higher progress shall be barred. One must be detached to the Siddhis.

One day in England Swami Saradananda, who was suffering from malaria for a long time and was much reduced and weak, sat at the Swami's feet whose power and personality towered over him at that moment, made him feel like a child near him and in that calm and meek spirit of surrender to his brother-disciple,—who to him was no other than Sri Ramakrishna in another body—asked for his blessings and the promise of knowledge and salvation in an inspiration of spiritual fervour. In a moment he was calm and at the will of the Swami he

became healthy and strong. Swami Saradananda testified to the psychic power of this new Vivekananda, never revealed to him before this in his intimate friend Naren. There are many others, a few yet living, who had the occasion of seeing this phase of the Swami which revealed his great powers—the Siddhis that came to him but remained suppressed as he hated to demonstrate them.

Sri Kalidas Mitra was a great lover of fine arts and crafts and had studied them profoundly. As soon as Kalidas Mitra seated himself in the room his thoughts and ideas vibrated in Swamiji and his normal expression of face, voice and modes of movements changed altogether. He looked at him and went on speaking on fine arts, painting and its allied branches, even dresses of different countries and their relation to nature and modes of expression. He spoke as if he was delivering a very learned and interesting lecture to an assembly of artists and painters. None could guess at that moment that he was anything else than a painter and artist himself and all his life he could have done anything else than its culture and practice.

The colour harmony, the different combinations of colours and shades, grace, postures and different angles and position of the eye, the waist, the bust and the different poses and attitudes, etc.,—these were his subject. I was young and could not follow the subject in details, but I had no doubt that it was a wonderful lecture on arts and painting and crafts in general.

Then the Swami compared and contrasted the different schools of painting in different countries—Italy, France, China, Persia, Japan and Buddhist India, Moghul School of Painting, etc. We were highly pleased and felt elated but could not

follow in details. Once the Swami was invited to a famous theatrical hall in France. Its drop scenes were painted by a renowned painter. The paintings of this artist and this particular stage were then foremost among all the then paintings and theatres in Paris. Swamiji knew French and could follow the drama played before him. All of a sudden he noticed some part of the screen which revealed some technical mistakes which could have been improved. When the play was over he called the Manager and with him came the artists who were eager to learn the impressions of this honoured and renowned guest, who came by the introduction of a well-known patron of this theatre. When he pointed out the technical defects in the scene, they were astonished, for the scene in question was supposed to be a master, piece and the defect could not be detected even by trained eyes. The artist owned it and was highly pleased to learn the Swami's suggestion about the harmony of expressions in the figures, thinking that he knew as much of the technique of painting as of any other subject.

We have heard of another incident. When in England, Swamiji went with Miss Muller and a few others to see Prof. Venn. Miss Muller had been a student of Logic under the Professor, whose *Logic of Chance* was as famous as his deep knowledge in this subject. He had spent his life in studying Logic and was considered one of the authorities in the subject in Europe. Mr Venn had heard of the Swami. But as the metaphysical problems did not interest him much, discussion turned round the subject of Logic alone. When Swamiji spoke on Logic the Professor thought, the Swami had spent his time only in the study of this subject as himself and remarked to himself, 'A logician of India has come today to meet another of the West.'

To return to the art of painting, the root of the word 'Chitra' is chit. Whatever manifests the Chit before us is picture. As soon as the Swami turned inwards into the Chidakasa, the space eternal, all the principles of art and its expression came to his vision. He would at once know all the intricacies of art and all the pictures that he had ever seen would focus themselves in his mind. He would very often say, 'If I see a thing it goes down into the sub-conscious region of the mind and again comes out on the conscious plane when thus required.' Also, 'If I meditate on the brain of a Sankara, I become a Sankara; if I meditate on the brain of

a Buddha, I become a Buddha. Even the thoughts and subjects that never occurred to me before would all come before me, when I concentrate on a particular subject and I could visualize all of them, so that I go on speaking whatever I feel, forgetting myself. As all of you know I have no learning and am a simple man!' He demonstrated this also in England while he lectured there.

We all thought that day of this peculiarity of the Swami and wondered at this philosopher who would only talk of painting and art and the technique of colours.

(to be continued)

VEDANTIC IDEAL OF EDUCATION

M. HAFIZ SYED

I

'Of Atman this life is born' (*Prashnopanishad*, III. 3). This is how the beginning of human life is definitely indicated in the Srutis. Man is not his body, or his senses or even his mind. These are his *upadhis*, vehicles, and nothing more. These vestures are subject to change, decay and death, whereas the real man, the immortal Self is ever abiding, never-ending, 'eternal, unborn, perpetual and ancient'.

In the Sruti and Smriti, in Purana and Itihasa, the self in man is declared to be of the nature of Brahman. 'He, this great unborn Self, is He who is this intelligence in living creatures, He who is this *akasa* in the heart', says the Upanishad. As the sparks from a fire are similar in nature with the fire so the self of man is identical with the Supreme Self. The jivat-

man seed grows into self-conscious Deity in due course, through spiritual evolution. Thus, according to ancient Indian thought, the conception of man is quite different from that of other religions or schools of philosophy that have prevailed in the world.

Man is truly divine in his nature and shares divine life. The jivatman differs from Brahman only as the seed from the tree that bears it. When the Atman descends into anatman, or the spirit enters into matter, this process is called the path of forthgoing. When the spirit emerges from material phenomenon, this ascent of it is called evolution or the path of return. These processes are determined by a fixed immutable law which in other words is called the law of cause and effect. It is this law which guarantees success in every plane of our being, be it physical, mental

or spiritual. Without its dominance over all our thought and action there would be no security for us nor any surety for any result we may try to achieve.

The Upanishadic conception of the Brahman is that it is the Self which hears, sees, minds and knows, which does not disappear with the different acts of knowledge, which is unaltered in all those acts and without which they were themselves impossible. It is in one word, our Self, the Soul of souls, which as such is mere knowledge in the abstract, far from any limits, and independent of the objects of knowledge. It is the Light of lights, Life of all lives, Mind of all minds. It is the hidden Life, vibrant in every atom. It is the hidden Light that shines in every creature.

The Brahman is the Antaryamin, the Inner Ruler and Controller. The soul of man is of the nature of knowledge and bliss, which abides in the heart. It is Parabrahman, the Light of lights.

The Hindus from time immemorial have always been believing in the immanence of God and the solidarity of man. To them life is education; and education is life. Here on earth we are probably in the nursery school of a vast educational system. Death may possibly transfer us to a higher school, or at least to a higher class. In any case we shall have to pass on from class to class and from school to school. And while we are continuing our education, two processes will be carried on in our souls—two processes which are really one—the awakening of consciousness in the hidden depths of our being, and the transcendence of self. The immanent God is at the heart of each of us. In His life we live. In His infinitude we are infinite. In His eternity we are eternal.

To awaken consciousness in deeper and still deeper strata of our subconscious

being is the task that awaits us in this and all future lives.

The life of Self-illumination and Self-transcendence will be a life of service and preparation for further service.

The immanent God is the innermost core of Reality.

The essence of worship is the dedication of the heart to God. The temple of God is everywhere. The worthiest offering that we can lay on the altar is service. And the medium of communion with God is selfless love.

This, in short, is the Hindu conception of Godhead as different from the Semitic religions which mostly believe in an extra-cosmic God who rules the world as He wills. He is quite different from human beings whom He is said to have created.

It seems to me that if the civilized people of the world can revise their conception of Godhead and can bring themselves to believe in the immanence of God, they would be in a position to have fuller and deeper sympathy with all human beings without any exception. They would then be in a position to serve all, love all, and live in the lives of others. This sound conception of life should be inculcated in the mind of little children in an easier form from their early ages. And therefore it is essential that this ideal should be borne in mind while dealing with them at every stage of life. On this ideal alone we can build a new edifice of education which would serve as a sound foundation of education for all times to come, and which would enable us to awaken and develop our inner and deeper consciousness at present veiled from us due to our own ignorance.

II

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS IDEAL

We must dedicate ourselves to the service of our common humanity, and not

ourselves only. We must also dedicate our children. Or rather we must make it possible for them to follow the bent of their real nature and dedicate themselves. If the grown-up man finds it hard to enter the Kingdom of God, the reason is that he was not allowed to enter it while he was still a child.

Devotion to the universal ideal is of inner necessity disinterested. If there is any taint of self-interest in our service, we may be sure that we are not rendering it to the Infinite Whole. We cannot serve God and mammon. Still less can we serve God and self. Absolutely disinterested service is an ideal which we can never hope to realize. In other words, it is a true ideal, an end which we must never cease to pursue. It is in order to learn the lesson of disinterested devotion that we are living our lives on earth; and we cannot begin to learn the lesson at too tender an age.

The world is sick of a grave malady, and it is now passing through a dangerous crisis. The symptoms have already been described. They amount to this, that the old ideals are worn out, that the old restraints have lost their power, that a flood of selfish desires and lawless passions has been let loose and that we are nearer to moral anarchy than we have been for many centuries. For so desperate a disorder there is but one remedy—a new ideal or hierarchy of ideals, a radical change in the inner man. Apart from such a change, our attempts at reform are so much patchwork, and our schemes of reconstruction are the idlest of dreams. We may alleviate symptoms. We cannot cure the disease. But to make such a change—the change of being ‘born again’—when one has reached adult life, is a task of almost superhuman difficulty. ‘Conversion’—the sudden transformation of the inner man

—is a very rare phenomenon. It presupposes an exceptional combination of circumstances. It is not always a healthy movement. It is sometimes hysterical or otherwise morbid. The new life does not always endure, the violent change being sometimes followed by an equally violent reaction. If a change in the inner man is to be permanent and effective, it must be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, the outcome of a secret process of growth rather than of a sudden reversal of the current of one’s being. In other words, it must, as a rule, be begun in the nursery and carried on through childhood and adolescence into adult life.

The cult of the transcendent God has been the evil genius of education in Christendom. The parent and the schoolmaster have played the part of the God whom they worshipped, in the little worlds which they ruled. And they have reproduced in the life of the child, and therefore of the man, all the evils which the tyranny of the omnipotent autocrat has wrought in the life of mankind. They have applied to the child—applied, that is, to the growing man, at the time when his growth ought to have been most vigorous, when the sap of his life was rising most strongly—a steady and relentless pressure which has had behind it a heavy weight of ignorance, prejudice, and ‘will to power’. The result of this pressure has been, in part to arrest, in part to warp his growth; and as growth, if healthy and harmonious, is the most emancipative of all forces, as it concentrates in itself all emancipative forces, the further result of the pressure of dogmatic education has been to imprison the child in himself. And as the child, animated by the instinct to live, has passively resisted this deadly pressure, the autocratic controllers of his destiny have tried to

overcome his resistance by alternating rewards with punishments, bribes with threats. In doing this they have lowered the whole plane of his effort and activity and de-idealized his whole outlook on life. And when bribes and threats have failed them, they have gone further along the path of compulsory demoralization. They have forced the child to compete with his class-mates for prizes and other marks of distinction, and have thus tempted him to regard his comrades as rivals and possible enemies, to pride himself on his petty achievements, to look down on those whom he may have happened to surpass. In other words, they have deliberately exploited his selfishness, his ambition, and his vanity. They have done more than this. They have made him dependent on themselves for instruction and guidance, and have thus paralysed his faith in himself. They have weakened his will, partly by trying to break it, partly by giving him no opportunity for the exercise of self-discipline and self-control. They have made him blind, or at least dim of vision, by assuming that he could not see. They have sterilized his intellectual, his artistic, and his constructive capacity by wilfully narrowing the field of his development; and when his tastes and powers have died of inanition, they have taken for granted that they never existed, that he was by nature as stupid and helpless as he was vicious and perverse. Above all, they have taught him to look without instead of within for his ideals, his motives, his standards of value, his tests of reality, his proofs of failure or success. And, as the crowning injury, they have tried to make him religious, not by helping him to discern and follow *the Light which lighteth all men*, but by requiring him to take part in ceremonial observances which have no

meaning for him, and by forcibly dieting him on their own scriptures and creeds.

The whole scheme of his education seems to have been framed for the express purpose of turning him out into the world with few or no interests which can take him away from himself, the victim of arrested or at best of one-sided mental and spiritual development, imprisoned in a narrow and conventional morality, dominated by the prejudices of his own social class, absorbed in selfish aims and ambitions, destitute of any sense of human fellowship, a materialist, an individualist, an externalist, asking from life too much of comfort and pleasure, too little of that deeper happiness which is at his service if he will but claim it. There are many lessons which his pastors and masters have omitted to teach him. But there is one which they seem to have deliberately prevented him from learning—the lesson of *disinterested devotion, of self-realization through self-forgetfulness, of losing the world that he may find his soul*.

Yet he was ready to learn that lesson before they took him in hand. *The pioneers in education who have based their schemes on trust in the natural goodness and the all-round capacity of the average child, have proved this to the full.* There are schools in England which are ideal social communities—schools in which the children, released from needless pressure, allowed to express themselves freely in many ways, allowed to develop themselves in many directions, have found, in the joy of ‘unimpeded energy’, the sense of oneness with their fellows through partnership in a common life; schools in which material rewards and punishments are unknown, in which honest effort is its own reward, in which the success of each is a matter of rejoicing for all, in which the spirit of comradeship has killed the spirit

of competition, in which the whole atmosphere is electrical with life and happiness and goodwill. At present such schools may be counted on one's fingers; but if the basis of education could be changed they would multiply, and as they multiplied there would be a corresponding change in the basis of our social life.

The cult of the transcendent God, involving as it does profound distrust of human nature, has, I repeat, weakened education. Let us now base education on the cult of the immanent God, and on the inexhaustible trust in human nature which is at the heart of that cult. It is not for me to suggest how this is to be done. The immanent God 'fulfils Himself in many ways'; and in the sphere of education, if in no other, exclusive devotion to any 'custom', however 'good', will sooner or later 'corrupt the world'. The 'orthodox' type of education has been a failure not only because its aims and ideals have been at fault, but also because of its blind belief in stereotyped methods, which it has forced on the teacher as well as on the child. In this it had been true to its own master principle, for if the immanent God fulfils Himself in many ways the transcendent God reveals Himself in only one. Let the new education be equally true to its master principle, the principle which is inherent in its faith in divine immanence. At present the new education is a heresy. Let it take care that it never degenerates into orthodoxy. Let it give freedom and

responsibility in a generous measure to the teacher, and through the teacher to the child. Its confidence will not be misplaced. What matters it if each of a thousand pioneers in education takes a path of his own? If they are all animated by reverence for the indwelling spirit of God, and therefore for the unfolding nature of the child, they will all arrive, in the fulness of time, at the same goal.

For they will have taught their pupils or rather they will have helped them to learn for themselves, the great lesson of disinterested devotion, the great lesson of loyalty to the community—to an ever-widening community—in and through loyalty to one's own higher self. When this lesson has been widely learnt and practised, the reform of our social life will become something more than a politician's promise or an enthusiast's dream. It is through its action on the child, even more than through its action on the adult, that the cult of the autocrat of the Universe has corrupted man's nature and demoralized his life. The adult is what his upbringing had made him and it is not easy for him to become anything else. But the child may become anything. The Kingdom of Heaven is as open to him as is the prison of self. We have hitherto gone out of our way to drive him to the prison of self. Let us now help him to enrol himself as a citizen of the Kingdom. Then, in the next generation, we shall perhaps have a better and happier world.

We should give positive ideas. Negative thoughts only weaken men. Do you not find that where parents are constantly taxing their children to read and write, telling them that they will never learn anything and calling them fools and so forth, the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases? If you speak kind words to them, encourage them, they are bound to improve in time...We have seen how Sri Ramakrishna would encourage even those whom we considered worthless and change the very course of their lives thereby! He never destroyed a single man's special inclinations. He gave words of hope and encouragement even to the most degraded persons and lifted them up.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Genuine greatness always attracts. Two broad types respond to the pull. The first consists of those in whom selfishness overpowers nobility most of the time. They like to be seen in the great man's company. They go through formal baptism or initiation, as it creates the satisfaction of being in the privileged 'inner circle'. That may also make it easy to offer a handsome fee, as Simon did, of course, in vain, to Peter,¹ for being taught the technique of laying hands and working miracles. A little rebuke, a little obstruction, is often enough to transform their ambition into bitter hatred and secret betrayal. In the second type higher impulses play the major part. But the few seeds of vanity left in their minds can sprout up unexpectedly and put forth ugly leaves. They may openly dispute among themselves as to who should be considered the greatest among them.² They want to share in their Master's glory by sitting on his right hand or the left hand.³ They quickly become rivals of those who do good things, but do not follow the self-chosen faithfuls like themselves.⁴ When slighted in the least, they fall into a rage and press their Master to 'command fire' from heaven to consume the ignorant offenders.⁵ Their perspective may not fully alter even if the Master rebukes them and points out that he has come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. The cock may crow many times before their attitude of denial is totally replaced by the willingness to bear the cross and 'drink of the

cup'. And yet it is from such beginnings and through such pains that chosen vessels are fashioned to carry peace and grace to the weak and sorrow-laden, age after age.

* * *

A certain rich man planted a pole in front of his house and on its top placed a bowl of sandalwood, fitted with jewels. Whoever could take it down, without using a ladder or a stick with a hook, but by sheer magic power, would be rewarded with all that he wanted! The story goes that Kasyapa, a disciple of Buddha, fulfilled the strange conditions and triumphantly took it to the vihara. 'Great is the Tathagata,' said the astonished people, 'for his disciples perform miracles!' The Master promptly went to the disciple, broke the bowl to pieces, and along with it, the fancy his followers had for attempting miracles of any kind.

As, however, the root of ignorance and vanity remained intact, another ugly leaf appeared in due course on the sprout! It is said that once in a famine area many bhikshus gathered to spend their rainy season. They soon devised an ingenious method to secure more food; and it was simply this: They would praise one another saying, 'This bhikshu is a saint; he sees visions; that other has supernatural gifts' and so on. The trick succeeded, as it must anywhere for some time. The villagers gave abundantly from their limited stock, saying in their innocent joy, 'We are lucky in having such saints spending their rainy season amidst us.'

1. The Acts 8, 18-20. 2. St. Mark 9, 34; St Luke 8, 46. 3. St. Mark 10, 37. 4. St. Mark 9, 31; St. Luke 9, 49. 5. St. Luke 9, 51-56.

When details of this painful episode reached Buddha, he made them all assemble before him and gave them a suitable rebuke. He laid down that any one who, with evil intent or from covetousness, boasts of superhuman perfection—visions or miracles—would cease to be his disciple forthwith. Why should any one attempt spells or supplications when the law of karma governs all things, and the noble eightfold path must produce its own beneficent results?⁶

* * *

But as long as, in power of discernment the disciples stood on a lower level than their Master, some problem or other was bound to arise; and the Master's compassion could not but express itself in a continuous downpour of teaching, with altered stresses adapted to the needs of different contexts and temperaments.

To cite just one example: As larger numbers began to wear the yellow robes and go into homelessness, the public in general got annoyed and even angry. They complained that Sakyamuni was inducing fathers to leave their wives and making families extinct. They also reviled the bhikshus whom they met, and wondered who the next victim might be! One part of this problem was solved when Buddha assured the disciples that this commotion would last only seven days, and instructed them to reply that the Tathagatas led men only by preaching the truth to them, and that the instructions related only to the cultivation of self-control, righteousness and a clean heart.

The other part of the problem was solved piecemeal, as often as aspirants came for interview, put their own questions and received their answers.

Anathapindika, a wealthy and virtuous man, known as the supporter of orphans

and the friend of the poor, paid his respects to the Buddha. The Master at once saw the sterling qualities of the man and spoke to him about the composure of the mind, which is commonly known as 'resting in the peace of immortality'. 'Let us', said he, by way of summing up, 'remember that all things are fixed by the law of causation, and practise good so that good may result from our actions.' Anathapindika then described in brief how his life was full of work which brought him wealth, as also cares, but how he applied himself joyfully to it, and the many people in his employ in fact depended for their maintenance on the very success of his enterprises. He had, however, heard Buddha's disciples praise the bliss of the hermit and denounce the unrest of the world. They were pointing out that the Master had renounced his kingdom and inheritance, thus setting an example to all about the way of attaining Nirvana. 'Must I, then,' said Anathapindika, 'give up my wealth, my home, my business enterprises and, like you, go into homelessness to attain the bliss of a religious life?'

This is a danger inherent in all teaching by monks. Even if a monk shows Krishna and Arjuna discussing philosophy on the battlefield, unwary students are likely to jump to the conclusion that,—whatever the intermediate arguments might be,—the motive of the teacher is to make one and all somehow retire from active work and become monks! Unwariness is the parent of a host of misunderstandings.

Buddha was clear in his answer: 'I say to thee, remain in thy station of life and apply thyself with diligence to thy enterprises. It is not life and wealth and power that enslave men, but the clinging to them. The monk who leads a life of

6 and 7 adapted from *The Gospel of Buddha* by Paul Carus, ch. xlii and xxv-xxvi respectively.

leisure will have no gain; a life of indolence is a veritable abomination. Whatever men do, whether they are artisans, merchants, officers of the king or monks doing meditation, let them put their whole heart into their task; let them remain diligent and energetic. If they remain free from hatred and envy, as the lotus grows in the water yet remains untouched by it, then surely joy, peace and bliss will dwell in their minds.' He, then added some beautiful words about the glory of charity. 'By giving away our food', said he, 'we get more strength, by bestowing clothing on others, we gain more beauty; by founding abodes of purity and truth, we acquire great treasures. Just as the

vigorous warrior goes to battle, so is the man who is able to give. He is like an able warrior, a champion strong and wise in action. The charitable man has found the path of salvation. We reach the immortal path only by continuous acts of kindness and we perfect our souls by compassion and charity.'

What a stabilizing and inspiring answer to one who yearned always to do what was right and to be a blessing to his fellow-beings! The truly great see the lamp of love that is burning in every heart, and by delicate handling increase its illumining power till it becomes infinite.

भग चैवेति ।

SUBANDHU

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Rehabilitation of Hindu Society: The Problem of Our Submerged Millions: Conclusions

In this issue we conclude our deliberations on 'Rehabilitation of Hindu Society', one of the greatest problems of India of today. We do not claim that we have been able to discuss the problem in all possible aspects. We have only endeavoured to stimulate right-thinking—as we have been given to understand—in regard to some basic concepts affecting the problem.

Samanwaya Ashram or the Technique of Social Synthesis

This important article is the authorized English version (rendered by Sri Dada Dharma-dhikari, Bhoodan Yajna, Maraipur, Gaya) of the Hindi original written by Acharya Vinoba Bhave, for the guidance of the inmates of the Samanwaya Ashram he started in 1953. Originally though not intended for the general public,—it will be seen that the general public has a claim over it,—Sri

Vinoba has been persuaded to concede it⁸ publication.

While recording as clearly as he can his ideas and ideals regarding the Samanwaya Ashram, Vinoba also presents here some of his original ideas got through intense spiritual search and research. India will do well to hearken this man. For Acharya Vinoba has something new, refreshing and original to say in this world of assertive, arrogant, and aggressive platitudes. He uses the language of religion and meditation but he understands the world through and through in a revolutionary way. Many of our revolutions, political or social, are half-hearted. But Vinoba seems to be a whole-hogger. Otherwise how could this duodenal ulcer patient cover about 20,000 miles on foot over this ancient land, begging, giving, preaching and praying? This extraordinary man's some ideas expressed in this paper will surely appear somewhat strange and Utopian to many readers. But one should remember this *parivrajaka's* tremendous

7. Vide footnote no. 6.

dynamism of faith. He does not fly by jet-planes, or even board a train or a car, but his winged ideas have already crossed mountains and oceans. Therefore, this visionary cannot be trifled with though one may not take him to be infallible. He has to be taken in all seriousness,—for he has proved that he means business—at least for honest examination of his views.

Taking him in all seriousness, we have marked one serious lacuna in Sri Vinoba's plan for Samanwaya Ashram. It is like a beautiful temple of ideas built from the steeple below, as it were, and not from foundation to steeple. Or is it that Sri Vinoba takes certain fundamentals for granted? The Acharya concedes that the modern Indian civilization is the efflorescence of the Vedic culture. He accepts the greatness of Acharyas and tradition. He has also abiding faith in the Sanatana Dharma and its power to recreate itself. But he does not seem to acknowledge the necessity of *Sannyasa* in reference to his Ashram. If this Ashram has to live on with a mission for the future, dedicated workers will be necessary. But dedicated lives require a traditional mode of living. Even if external *Sannyasa* is rejected only *Naishthika Brahmacharins* can fulfil the end which Vinoba has in view. If *Naishthika Brahmacharya* is accepted, why should *Sannyasa* be rejected?

The ideal of *Sannyasa* remains as valid and revolutionary as ever when earnest aspirants offer themselves as offering in that ever-blazing flame. Sri Vinoba's original ideas cannot be contained by any lesser souls than the

renouncers of the world (*kama* and *kanchana*), whether they don white or ochre. Without a firm foundation on *Sannyasa* no Ashram can ever stand the test of the world and time, not to speak of being able to do anything worthwhile.

Notwithstanding our point of criticism, we commend this article for study and reflection to all serious students of social science, religion and philosophy.

Vedantic Ideal of Education

One of the most agitating themes of our times is education. There are ever so many contending ideas and their missionaries in the field that one does not quite know which to choose and which to reject. In this vast human laboratory of the world a variety of pedagogic experiments are going on. It will be noticed that all these ideas and experiments are conditioned by the educationists' conception of man and his destiny. But the boldest, the most perfect and sublime conception of man and his destiny belongs to Vedanta. This is how the Vedantic ideal has the greatest claim on the thinking of the educationists of the world, though up till now precious little has been done in this direction. Our time, however, desperately calls for that type of education which is based on the noblest conception of man and his destiny.

Dr M. Hafiz Syed's bold article on this theme is not claimed to be an exhaustive thesis in this regard but it is calculated to be a timely pointer which deserves serious attention.

NOT FOR SECULARITY'S SAKE BUT FOR THE SAKE OF SPIRITUALITY

There was a time when some section of sadhus in India did not take kindly to Swami Vivekananda's gospel of service. They even showered ridicule on his pioneer followers, called them at places 'bhangi sadhus'—because they served all without any regard for anything, caste, creed, religion or social

status, in a dedicated spirit of worship—and boycotted them in sadhu samaj. But days gradually changed. Today all discerning sadhus by and large acknowledge that the message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda constitutes the *yuga-dharma* and as such is the common heritage, not only of all sections of

sadhus but also of the entire mankind. No section of sadhus today seems to hold the view that service is profanation of spirituality. On the contrary, one finds that wherever there are Ashrams or monasteries, service-institutions are also springing up. Renunciation has come to be associated with service in such a way—largely due to the impact of Swami Vivekananda's life and teachings—that these twin ideals have come to be considered as but facets of the whole ideal. And this is a happy augury. The constitution of Sadhu Sevak Samaj in a way testifies to this spiritual tendency of the country.

Though by now organized service is nothing new in Indian spiritual tradition, Sadhu Sevak Samaj is an extraordinary institution in quite a few ways :

- (a) It did not spring from the spontaneous outflow of the spiritual experiences of any saint. It was constituted at the instance of administrative authority in the country.
- (b) Its members do not owe any allegiance to a common spiritual preceptor unlike other religious or missionary organizations in India or abroad.
- (c) It starts with the assurance of Government patronage with the implicit understanding that it will work out the Government's plans and programmes.
- (d) A non-political organization though, politicians seem to be moulding its soul, philosophy, principles and aspirations.

It is for the sadhu leadership in the organization to consider the implications of these facts in the formation of its character with the power of which alone it can become an instrument of genuine good to the country and humanity.

The report of the first Convention of the Sadhu Sevak Samaj, which was held in Rishikesh in the 2nd week of April made a surprising reading. The reporting of the Convention to the Press has been done in such a peculiar manner that though 400 sadhus attended the Convention, though some eminent Sannyasins addressed the assembly,

not a single word spoken by them was reported.

But the words of Sri G. L. Nanda, Planning Minister, have found prominent place in the report. Of all the advices given by Sri Nanda, one advice reveals as to how the administration of the country wants to shape this organization according to its liking. The report runs: 'Mr Nanda asked the Samaj to be secular in its outlook and serve the people without considerations of caste, creed and colour.'

With due regard to the sadhus of the organization and with due deference to the administration of the country, we like to point out that this is a bad trend of affairs in the country, this attempt, intentional or unintentional, of the administration at what is known in some countries as 'brainwashing'. Sadhus are fundamentally spiritual beings, whether they do organized service or lead a life of meditation and study. When sadhus form themselves into an organization that is naturally a religious body. And the outlook of this organization must be fundamentally spiritual whatever their programme of work. And this outlook should be a spontaneous expression of the inner life of the holy men of the Samaj. It should not be the business of any man or the administration of the country to come and say that the Samaj must develop a 'secular outlook'. It is absolutely an unnecessary venture for politicians to try to pattern the thoughts of sadhus after their slogans, right or wrong. It is one thing to expect the sadhus to help in nation-building affairs, it is totally a different affair to try to change their spiritual outlook into a secular one.

Let us not be misunderstood. We are not criticizing here Sri G. L. Nanda, the person. We are here cautioning the country against a tendency of the time-spirit which picked up Sri Nanda as but an instrument. Secularity can never be the creed of sadhus. Dharma alone is their *swadharma*.

Sadhus will render service to the people not for the sake of secularity but for the sake of spirituality. They will serve all irrespective

of caste, creed or religion not because the Government want them to do so, but because Vedanta wants them to do so. The sadhus will preach the gospel of truth and unity and service above self not because the Planning Commission has thought it necessary but because sadhus' lives remain a void without being dedicated in the service of God moving about in the shape of men. It is not for the sadhus to become secular, it is for the secular people to become sadhu-like.

The greatest and the primary duty of the holy man whether he lives in a Samaj or moves about freely as air, is to keep his spiritual sovereignty intact. It is a false and dangerous philosophy which says that in secularity is the quintessence of religion, piety and catholicity. It should be the business of the sadhus to repudiate this thesis root and branch, and do whatever they would, for the sake of God and spirituality alone. Whatever happens in India or the world, sadhus must stand by the truth of their being which is spirituality, they must do everything through and for the sake of spirituality and do nothing without or contrary to it. If this stand of the sadhus angers the administration, they must be ready to bear it in all humility but they must refuse to be brainwashed and unlearn spirituality for the sake of secularity.

In a Radio talk on the Buddha, Dr Radhakrishnan said, 'Life is intended to be the pursuit of Dharma. Aswaghosha tells us we must beat the drum of Dharma, hoist the

flag of Dharma, blow the conch of Dharma and be performers of Dharma so far as this world is concerned.' This exactly is the duty of the sadhus. What is more, they should also teach the people, not excluding the administrators of the country, to discriminate and distinguish between Dharma and secularity.

Corruption, 'casteism', communalism, separatism—spirituality has answer for every such and any other disease, because only spirituality can reorganize a man from his very depths. If the sadhu will repudiate corruption, it is because Dharma demands it and not for secularity; if the sadhu will denounce casteism, it is because सर्व ब्रह्मनयं जगत् and not for secularity; if the sadhu will root out communalism, it is because it is the teaching of the Lord that all religions are but paths which lead to Him and not for secularity. If the Sadhus of the Samaj will fight untouchability, it is because they know that God indwells all men and not for secularity. If the sadhus should spread knowledge, it is because ignorance stands in the way of man's spiritual evolution and not for secularity.

If the men of administration hold the banner of secularity high, sadhus must hold the banner of spirituality higher still by making their own lives the blazing examples of the truths they preach.

साधु सावधान! 'Beware holy man!'—this exhortation of Sri Ramakrishna has a special relevance in the India of today.

RASHTRAPATI SETS AN EXAMPLE

It was indeed a unique function when the President of India gave (on June 1, '56) a party to the labourers who worked for furnishing the Rashtrapati Nilayam of Hyderabad. This example of beneficent content, we hope, will get evolved into a national tradition.

In June 1955 we urged the administration at the Centre and the States to hold on the

Independence Day such functions in the right Indian fashion at the Rashtrapati Bhavan at New Delhi and Raj Bhavans of States.

The President's initiative gives us hope that one day our 'A 15th August Challenge to the Rulers of India' will be fully accepted.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Sino-Indian Studies, Vol V & VI (Part I) (Quarterly): EDITED BY P. C. BAGCHI, M. A., DR ES LETTRES (PARIS), FOR COPIES APPLY TO THE SPECIAL OFFICER, PUBLICATION, VISVA-BHARATI, SANTINIKETAN; ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION Rs 12/-

Spiritual and cultural contact between the people of India and China is millenniums old. Poet Rabindranath Tagore, after his visit to China in 1924, opened a path for reviving this reciprocal relation by inaugurating the Sino-Indian Cultural Society and building the magnificent Chinese Hall and Library at Santiniketan called Cheena-Bhavana which has become a centre for scholars, research workers, teachers and students who have been working for Sino-Indian Cultural Co-operation for about two decades through the publication of studies and translations of ancient Indian texts lost in the original but preserved in Chinese translations and through the production of other works of allied interest. The quarterly *Sino-Indian Studies* contains high class research papers by scholars who have been working at Santiniketan or who take interest in the project. The numbers under review contain about 270 pages of which over 230 are devoted to *A Comparative Study of Pratimoksha* by Dr W. Pachow.

The *Pratimoksha*, or *Patimokkha* as it is found in the original Pali, is a classified series of Rules to be observed by the individual Buddhist monk throughout his life. Besides being a code for the personal discipline of the Bhikkhus and Bhikkunis the Parajika and Sanghadisesa Rules, contained in the *Pratimoksha*, give us an idea of the powers of the Sangha to punish the offending members of the monastic community. By the way, the Rules help us also to get a peep into contemporary political and social practices. According to Chinese and Japanese Buddhism the Rules are said to be numbering 250 and the Pali records contain 220 or 227 Rules including the part known as 'Adhikarana-Samatha' (settlement of dispute).

Being the earliest record of monastic Rules given with the precision, realism, insight and compassion of the Great Buddha, the *Pratimoksha* has drawn the attention of Eastern and Western scholars who have produced valuable editions of it and studies on it. These must have been of assistance to subsequent workers in the field among whom may be counted Dr Pachow who has now presented to the studies of ancient Indian culture a piece of original work bringing to date the researches on *Pratimoksha*. In this study are included historical criticism, structural analysis, comparison of recensions, internal evolution of text constituents and the appraisal of influence outside the boundary of the monastic community. This critical study starts with a documented explanation of the meaning of the word *Patimokkha* first based on the commentaries and then by an analysis of the root word in 'pratimokshya' which gives the sense 'a state of liberation and an act of purification compulsorily binding on each one'. Next, the number, date and authorship of the *Pratimoksha* are critically discussed taking into account the source material available in Sanskrit, Pali and Chinese. After an examination of the evidences available, Dr Pachow comes to the conclusion that the oldest Rules of the *Pratimoksha* date back to B. C. 500 and that no part of it could possibly be later than B. C. 250. Some details of the Councils of Rajagriha and Vesali are given in so far as they are connected with the redaction of the *Pratimoksha*. The genitic study of the *Pratimoksha* starts with the upavasatha observed by the Brahmanas and the Sramanas, connected with the Darsapurnamasa sacrifice on the full and new moon days. The Buddhist uposatha, on which the *Pratimoksha* is recited is an adaptation of the practice of the Vedic upavasatha gathering. An analysis of the Buddhist code of ethics will reveal that they fall under two categories, firstly the general Rules of conduct termed Sila which must be observed by both the lay and the

clergy and secondly the particular regulations of the Order meant for the ordained clergy, that is, the *Pratimoksha* mentioned here. It may be observed that the general Rules were common for all people of ancient India as the Vedic and Jain texts also make that clear. Included in the disciplinary personal Rules of the *Pratimoksha* we get the Siksapada or precepts for the probationers which are not identical with the Sila Rules though there are resemblances between the two.

The wisdom and compassion of Gautama the Buddha attracted to him innumerable disciples. The proximity of the great personality was often enough to convert even baser human material to pure gold. The first sixty disciples who received ordination from him became arhats and spread the gospel of the Master far and wide gaining a large number of followers who were ordained by the Buddha himself and admitted into the Sangha. When Rahula, the only son of Siddhartha, asked for his patrimony, Siddhartha, who has now become the Enlightened One, ordered Sariputta to ordain the boy and accept him into the Bhikshu Sangha. Thenceforward the disciples of the Buddha were empowered to ordain candidates and receive them into the Order. This innovation accelerated the growth of the Sangha in very rapid strides, perhaps leading to a diminution of quality inversely proportionate to the increase of the number. Rules and regulations were devised to insure against the shortcomings and these are compiled in the *Vinayapitaka* of which the *Pratimoksha* is perhaps the oldest part. These Rules were not drafted at one time; but they grew as occasions arose in the daily conduct of monks with varying antecedents and background, living under the same law. 'The original text', says Dr Pachow, 'before reaching its highest development must have undergone several changes in the process of editing and redacting, as such traces have been retained in the existing texts.' The principal precepts came into existence when actual occurrence

of a breach of the disciplinary regulations was brought to the notice of the Buddha and a penalty had to be prescribed. Subsequently Rules of secondary importance supplementing the cardinal ones grew stage by stage, with minor precepts gathering around them. The eight sections of the code dealing with (1) ex-communication (*parajika*), (2) confinement (*sanghavasesha*), (3) offences adjudged according to circumstance (*aniyata*), (4) that which requires repentance and forfeiture of one's articles (*naisargika*), (5) that which demands repentance and confession before the chapter (*payantika*), (6) what is blameworthy (*pratidesaniya*), (7) precepts of good manners (*saiksha*), and (8) ways of settling disputes (*adhikarana-sasta*), came into being. It is well known that Buddhism split into many schools after the passing away of the founder. Perhaps each of these schools possessed a *Pratimoksha* text of its own, though we have no conclusive evidence now to prove this. Eight of them still possess a *Vinayapitaka* containing the *Pratimoksha* texts, either preserved in Tibetan and Chinese translations, or available in Pali and Sanskrit manuscripts. The most painstaking part of the present learned study is an elaborate comparison of each Rule as presented in these various sources and arriving at certain factual conclusions based on the additions, omissions alterations and transpositions confronted during the comparative study.

Although the work is one of research of a high order meant for the specialist, the general conclusions succinctly presented in it and the regulations of *Pratimoksha* as far as they are presented in English are of interest to the general reader and of special value to the students of history and influence of monasticism here and elsewhere. Such systematic studies of ancient Buddhist texts from the background of Chinese and allied sources are a primary need for the reconstruction of the ancient Indian history and culture in a scientific manner.

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

NEWS AND REPORTS

A REPORT ON RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BOSTON RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE AND THE PROVIDENCE VEDANTA CENTRE, APRIL, 1956.

Swami Madhavanandaji, General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Order, and Swami Nirvananandaji, Treasurer of the Order, were guests of the Boston and Providence Centers during their recent visit to the United States. They arrived in Boston on Saturday, April 7, and were received at the airport by Swami Akhilananda, Swami Sarvagatananda, Mrs Anna M. Worcester, and a number of other devotees.

Swami Madhavananda gave a lecture on Sunday morning in the Boston Vedanta Society and the same evening in the Providence Vedanta Society, at the regular weekly services in both places. Swami Nirvanananda gave a talk Monday evening in Providence and the following Friday evening in Boston on his experiences with Swami Brahmananda. His remarks were highly appreciated by the devotees in both Centres who were extremely touched by his intimate and inspiring reminiscences.

The birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna was held in Providence on Tuesday evening, April 10. Swami Nirvanananda greeted the audience at the banquet and Swami Madhavananda gave a very interesting talk on the Master. Professor Ducasse of Brown University and Dr Richard Evans, a prominent Presbyterian minister of New York City were the other speakers. Swami Akhilananda presided and Swami Sarvagatananda gave the invocation. Many distinguished scholars, ministers, lawyers, doctors, and devotees were present.

The Boston Society held a similar banquet on Thursday evening, April 12. Dean Walter

Muelder of the Boston University School of Theology welcomed the visiting Swamis with deep appreciation for the message of Sri Ramakrishna and its effect in the United States. Swami Madhavananda was the principal speaker on the message of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Nirvanananda also gave a brief but very inspiring talk. Their speeches were deeply appreciated by the audience. Dr Allen E. Claxton, a prominent Methodist minister of New York City, and Dr Richard Evans of New York City spoke on their appreciation of the great Master and his disciples, like Swami Vivekananda and Swami Brahmananda. They also spoke highly of the effect of the message of the great Master in various fields of American life, including the work done in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and other educational and religious institutions by Swami Akhilananda, describing how he is spreading the message of the Master through personal interviews, counselling centres, and institutional activities in various parts of the Eastern states. Swami Akhilananda presided at the banquet and Swami Sarvagatananda gave the invocation. Among those present were President Herrick of the Newton Theological Seminary, Mrs Case, who represented her husband, the President of Boston University; Dr and Mrs George Williams from the Harvard Divinity School, philosophers, scientists, theologians, ministers, doctors, and other prominent persons, as well as the devotees of the Society.

The visit of these two distinguished Swamis was indeed a great event, not only in the history of these two Centers but also in the other Centers of the Ramakrishna Mission in America. They were deeply appreciated and were requested to come again.

The birthday of Swami Ramakrishnananda falls on Saturday, August 4, 1956.

NEW BOOKS

By

SWAMI AKHILANANDA

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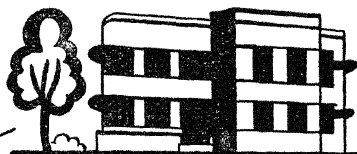
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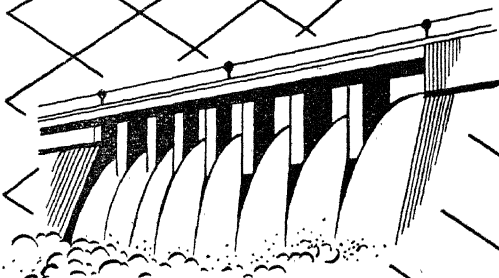
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